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ROM SEPOY TO SUBADAR:

BEING

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF A NATIVE OFFICER OF THE BENGAL ARMY WRITTEN AND RELATED BY HIMSELF.

MILITARY
BOMBAY
EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

TRANSLATED BY

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL NORGATE, B.S.C.

THIRD EDITION

EDITED BY

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL D. C. PHILLOTT, F.A.S.B.

Secretary and Member, Board of Examiners, Fellow of the Calcutta University, Author of a Hindustani Manual, Hindustani Stumbling-Blocks, etc., etc.

MILITARY
BOMBAY
EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

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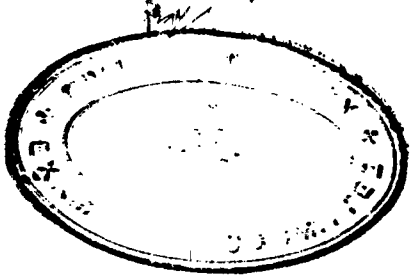

PREFACE BY TRANSLATOR.[1]

I have attempted to render into English the Life and Adventures of this Native Officer, and in so doing, have often been obliged to give the general meaning, rather than adhere to a literal translation of many sentences and ideas, the true idiom of which it is almost impossible to transpose into English.

In some parts of the narrative, it becomes rather confused, and some of the dates are evidently incorrect, but when it is remembered that "This Life" embraces scenes and events which occurred during a period of half a century, and are related by a Native, these errors are not surprising.

For the opinions contained in the work, I am not responsible: they are those of a Hindoo, not a Christian.

The narrative without doubt might have been expressed in more elegant language, and there are incidents enough, had one the pen of a "Grant," to have produced a most romantic tale, but as Truth is said to be stranger than Fiction, I have preferred to let it remain in its own unvarnished style and simplicity. For the benefit of those who may wish to criticize the translation, where any idiomatic words are used, the original are often given and critics are welcome to put that construction on these, as seemeth them best. It is believed that this is one of the first attempts of any native soldier, to give his thoughts and ideas to the world, and it occasioned great trouble, and a great amount of assurances had to be given, before the Soobadar would part with his memoirs; so afraid are the Natives (particularly those receiving pensions) of saying a word which might be considered to censure Government.

It is certain, that if we were to study this little work, we might obtain a better insight into native modes of thought and character, than unfortunately many now possess. This Life

[1] *i.e.* Lieut.-Colonel Norgate.—*Ed.*

and Adventures appeared some years ago in an Indian Periodical since defunct (alas, the fate of most Indian Periodicals), and at the time, met with great favour, and excited no little interest.

The Times said in 1863, "It would be well if all officers whose lot compels them to serve with native troops, were to study this Life of the old Soobadar."

PUNJAUB: "THE TRANSLATOR."
1*st January*, 1873.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

This little work has found so much favor with the public, that a second edition is called for. I believe the old Soobadar is dead: I do not see his name in the Army List now, but his words have not died with him,—they remain. Although circumstances have altered since his time, and some of his ideas are old fashioned, not so much bearing on things as now presented, I am still inclined to agree with him, that what he has written, "it is true."

PUNJAUB: "THE TRANSLATOR."
5*th March*, 1880.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

The Memoirs of Sītā Rām were originally written in Hindi and given to the original translator, Lieut.-Colonel[1] Norgate, Bengal Staff Corps, in 1861. His translation first appeared in an Indian Periodical, and as it is noticed by *The Times* in 1863, it must have been published about that time. It afterwards appeared in book form in 1873, printed, as the title-page informs us, in Lahore, at the Victoria Press, by Azizuddin. A second edition of the book appeared in 1880 printed by "W. Ball, Printer, etc., of Lahore."

These memoirs are of such absorbing interest that, unable to trace the original, I determined to translate them into simple *colloquial* Urdu, for the benefit of students. This was accomplished with the efficient help of Mawlavī Riẓā 'Alī Waḥshat.

This Urdu translation is now (September 1910) running in the *Faujī Akẖbār*.

As it has been decided to make this translation part of the new text-book for the Higher Standard in Urdu, I am publishing Lieut.-Colonel Norgate's original translation for the benefit of candidates. I have thought it proper to reproduce the text of his translation without alteration or correction of any kind, save that, for the benefit of candidates, I have added a few notes[2] and have also recast and numbered the paragraphs so as to facilitate comparison with the Urdu. The original punctuation and slips in spelling, etc., are retained.

CALCUTTA: D. C. P.
1910.

[1] Lieut.-Colonel at least in 1873. In a copy in the Imperial Library, Calcutta, some reader has inserted in pencil the initials J. T.

[2] *Tr.* after a note signifies that it was made by the original translator, Lieut.-Colonel Norgate; *Ed.*, that it is added by the present editor.

FROM SEPOY TO SOOBADAR:

BEING

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SEPOY.

Defender of the Poor—Obedience, etc., etc.,—I have, by the fatherly kindness of the Government, been granted my pension, and, according to your desire, I now send your Lordship, by the hands of my son, the papers containing all I can remember of my life during the forty-eight years I have been in the service of the English Nation in which I have eaten (*sic*) seven severe wounds, and received six medals, which I am proud to wear. I trust what I have now written, and what I have before at different times related to your honour, may prove, that there were some who remained faithful, and were not affected by the wind of madness which lately blew over Hindoostan; for my belief is, it was this which blighted the army. My Lord knows I am not much of a Moonshee, although I have been taught Persian; therefore my language must be excused. And without doubt, I have forgotten the English years in some instances; but what I have related to you, and what I have here written, it is true. To say more would be overstepping the bounds of propriety.

May prosperity ever attend your footsteps!

Your slave,

(*Signed*) SEETARAM, *Soobadar Pensioner.*

TILOWEE, OUDE, 1861.

CHAPTER I.[1]

1. I was born in the village of Tiloweè,[2] in Adjoodiah,[3] in 1797 A.D. My father was a Zemindar, by name Gungadeen Pandy. He possessed 470 beegas of land (beega, nearly one-third of an acre[4]), which he cultivated himself. My fâmily, when I was young, were in easy circumstances, and my father was considered a man of importance in the place. I was about six years of age when I was placed under the care of our family priest, Duleep Ram, in whom my father and mother placed implicit confidence, and never did anything of importance without his advice and consent. By him I was taught to write and read our own language; also a slight knowledge of figures was imparted to me. After I had acquired this, I considered myself far superior in knowledge to all the other boys of my age whom I knew, and held my head up accordingly; all Chuttores, Khaits, Aheers,[5] etc., were far below my notice. In fact, I fancied myself more clever than my preceptor Duleep himself; and if it had not been for the high respect he was held in by my father, I should on some occasions have even dared to tell him so. Until I was seventeen years of age, I attended my father in the management of his land, and was entrusted to give the corn to the coolies he sometimes employed in cutting his crops, draying water, etc.

2. My mother had a brother, by name Hunoman,[6] who was

[1] At the commencement of Seetaram's life is a long invocation to Premasur, Bughwan, etc., etc., to bless and prosper his undertaking: this has been omitted here.—*Tr.*

[2] *Tilo,ī.—Ed.* [3] Oude.—*Tr.*

[4] He therefore owned about 150 acres.—*Ed.*

[5] Different castes in India.—*Tr.* The proper spelling is *Chhutār*, *Kāyath*, *Ahīr.—Ed.*

[6] *Hanumān—Ed.*

in the service of the Company Bahadoor, and was a Jemadar in an infantry battalion. He had come home on furlough for six months, and on his way to Mussorabad,[1] his own home, he stayed with my father. My uncle was a very handsome man, and of great personal strength. He used of an evening to sit on the seat before our house, and relate the wonders of the world he had seen, and the prosperity of the great Company Bahadoor he served, to a crowd of eager listeners, who with open mouths and staring eyes took in all the marvels he related as undoubted truths. None of his hearers were more attentive than myself, and from these recitals I imbibed a strong desire to enter the world, and try the fortune of a soldier. Nothing else could I think of, day or night. The rank of Jemadar I looked on as quite equal to that of the Nawab Ghazeedeen Hyder[2] himself; in fact, never having seen the latter, I naturally considered my uncle as even of more importance—he had such a splendid necklace of gold beads, and a curious bright red coat, covered with gold buttons; and, above all, he appeared to have an unlimited supply of gold mohurs. I longed for the time when I might possess the same, which I then thought would be, directly I became the Company Bahadoor's servant.

3. My uncle had observed how attentive I was to all his stories, and how military ardour had inflamed my breast—and certainly he did all in his power to encourage me. He never said anything about it before my father and mother, or the Pundit; still he repeatedly told me privately, that if I wished to be a soldier, he would take me back with him on his return to his regiment. How I longed to mention this to my mother, but dare not; I well knew her darling wish was for me to become a Pundit. However, one day, when I had been reading with Duleep about the mighty battles fought by Christen,[3] I fairly told him my wish to become a soldier. How horrified he

[1] *Masūrābād—Ed.*

[2] The King of Oude at this time.—*Tr.*

[3] Krishṇa—*Ed.*

seemed—how he reproached me, by declaring that all the instruction he had so laboured to impart to me was thrown away, and that half the stories my uncle had told were false; that I might be flogged, and certainly should be defiled by entering the Company's service. A hundred other terrors he conjured up, but these had no effect on me.

4. The Pundit immediately went to my parents and informed them of my determination, and thus broke to them the subject I had not the courage to tell. To my great surprise, my father made no objections; these all came from my mother, who wept, scolded, entreated, and threatened me; ending by imploring me to give up the idea, and abused my father for not preventing such a catastrophe. At this particular period of which I now write, a lawsuit was impending over my father, about his right to a mango grove of some four hundred trees, and he thought that having a son in the Company Bahadoor's service would be the means of getting his petitions attended to in the law courts of Lucknow: for it was well known that an *urzee* sent by a soldier, through his Commanding Officer, who forwarded it on to the Resident Saheb in Lucknow, generally had prompt attention paid to it, and carried more weight than even the bribes and party interest of a mere subject of the Nawab.

5. Shortly after my parents had been informed of my desire to take service with the Company Bahadoor, my uncle left them to proceed to his own home, about 25 *coss*[1] off; and although my mother never expressed any wish for him to pay another visit when he was about to return to his regiment on the expiration of his furlough, he told her he intended to do so, and that he should take me with him if I were still in the same mind.

I walked the first few miles with him on his journey, and made him tell me all about the service I wished to enter, over and over again.

[1] *Kos*, properly a measure equal to about two miles, is anything from a mile to two and a half miles; a 'mile and a bittock'.—*Ed.*

6. Upon my return home, I had to sustain the united attacks of the Pundit and my mother: they tried every inducement to make me give up the idea; my mother even cursed the day her brother had set foot in our house. But all they could get from me was, that I would think over the matter. So I did, and every day became more and more determined to follow my uncle. I now felt idle, and did very little else than learn to wrestle or play with the sword sticks, and consequently neglected my father's fields, which caused me to fall under his displeasure. However, a threat from him that I should never be allowed to see my uncle again, had the effect of bringing me a little to my senses; and my father had no occasion to find fault with me afterwards.

7. The months passed away, and the rainy season had ended, and I was engaged in cutting sugar-cane, with my back towards the road, when I was called by name by some one on a pony. I soon recognized my uncle, and flew to his embrace. After inquiries for my father and mother, he asked me if I wished to be a soldier still, and looked pleased when I answered, so decidedly, "Yes." He told me I was a *koob-jewan* [1] (fine young fellow), and that I should go with him. My uncle remained a few days at our house, during which time, having my father to back him up, he in a measure succeeded in bringing my mother to think it was my destiny to be a soldier, and her fate to part with her son. The Pundit was requested to look at my horoscope,[2] and discover the lucky day for my departure; which he informed us, in the evening, would be at six o'clock in the morning of the fourth day from that, if no thunder was heard during the period.[3] How anxiously I watched the clouds those four days—how I prayed to Narain, and Indur.[4] And in the evening of the third day, when some

[1] *Khūb jawān.* In Urdu, *khūb* is properly an adverb only.—*Ed.*

[2] *JunumPutra.*—*Tr.*

[3] Untimely thunder renders a journey inauspicious.—*Ed.*

[4] Gods of the Rain, Clouds, etc.—*Tr.* Nārāyaṇ is the supreme god and Indra is the god of Clouds, Storms, etc.—*Ed.*

dark clouds came up, I was in despair lest rain should fall, and fate be against me.

8. Duleep the Pundit, who really loved me, gave me lots of advice and made me promise never to disgrace my *junao* (Brahminical thread); he also gave me a *tabeez*,[1] or charm, in which was some dust a thousand Brahmins had trod at holy Prag (Allahabad); and he assured me this charm was so powerful, that as long as I kept it no harm could ever befall me. He bestowed on me likewise a book of our holy poems. My father bought me a pony, but gave me no money, as he considered I was now under my uncle's care, and that he could well support me.

9. The morning came, unclouded; it was the 10th day of Kartik 1812 Esawe[2] (10th October 1812), and at 6 o'clock I and my uncle left my home, to enter what was to me an unknown world. Just before starting, my mother violently kissed me, and gave me six gold mohurs (about one hundred rupees), sewn in a cloth bag; but being impressed with the idea that it was her *puralubd*[3] (fate) to part with me, she uttered no words, but moaned piteously. My worldly property, when I left home, consisted of my pony, my bag of ashrafees,[4] a lota and string, three brass dishes, one iron dish and spoon, two changes of dress, a smart turban, a dagger of the kind called *bichwa*,[5] and a pair of shoes. My uncle's baggage exceeded mine considerably, and was rolled up in a large bundle, which was carried by a coolie[6] from village to village. This poor man considered himself amply rewarded for his day's work by our giving him whatever bread was over at the daily meal.

1 *Ta'wīz*.—*Ed.*

2 Seetaram must have made some error here; 1814 perhaps he means, as he says he was seventeen years of age.—*Tr.*

3 *Prālabh*, a corruption of *prārabdh*, S., "previous actions."—*Ed.*

4 *Ashrafī*, a gold coin.—*Ed.*

5 *Bichū*,*ā* or *bichhawā*, etc., *lit.* a scorpion.—*Ed.*

6 *Qulī*, T.—*Ed.*

CHAPTER II.

10. My uncle and myself went one march in the morning, and during the heat of the day rested under some tree; in the evening we went the same distance. For the night, we always put up at a serai, if possible. On the third day we arrived at a village by name Dersungpore,[1] where two sepoys of my uncle's regiment joined us whose time of furlough was up. One was named Tillukdaree Gheer,[2] the other Deonarain.[3] They appeared delighted to meet my uncle, and treated him with great respect. Deonarain was accompanied by his younger brother, who was going for *nokree* (service); and as these all had tulwars, and Tillukdaree a short kind of gun, called *sherека-bucha* [4] (young tiger), we looked a rather formidable party, and felt secure against dacoits and thugs, who then infested the roads.

11. In the course of three or four days, a party of musicians came up with us, and begged to be allowed to join us, for the sake of protection. It consisted of two men with *dools* or drums, four men with *sitārs* (a kind of fiddle), two men with *jāls* [5] (small brass cymbals), and one with a *sang* [6] (a long trumpet). They informed us that they were on their way to attend a marriage festival at a town which lay on our road.

12. For several days everything went on smoothly, and the musicians enlivened our march by playing pretty airs; but during the night of the fourth day, my uncle happening to be awake, discovered that all these musicians had collected together, and were in some earnest debate, speaking in a low tone of voice, and in a tongue which he did not understand. Alarmed at what he saw, he immediately roused the other sepoys, and told them he believed these musicians were in

1 *Darsanpūr.—Ed.*

2 *Tilakdhārī Gīr.—Ed.* 3 *Deo Nārāyan.—Ed.*

4 A blunderbuss, supposed by the natives to strew bullets by giving it a sweep when in the act of firing.—*Tr.*

5 *Tāl?—Ed.* 6 *Saṅkh*, a conch?—*Ed.*

reality thugs. He then appointed one of our party to watch them whilst the rest of us again laid down to sleep.

13. The next morning my uncle told the musicians that he was obliged to go long marches, and therefore they would not be able to keep up with us. They, however, implored to be allowed to follow our party, and at the same time expressed great fear of being robbed on the road. But my uncle marched very early the next morning, leaving them behind. We went some eight miles on the straight road, and then branched off by a side path, intending to join the main road again some thirty miles further on.

14. Four more days passed without any matter of moment. At the evening's halting place on the fourth day, we were joined by a party of some twelve men, carrying bundles of *ringals* [1] (a kind of bamboo used for pipe stems). These men begged to be allowed to join us for protection, as the musicians had done. In the morning, when it was light, I fancied one of these men was remarkably like one of the former party, and mentioned this to my uncle, who went to them and entered into conversation. But their language was different to that of the musicians, their clothes were very dirty, and they looked like coolies. Still he was on his guard, and appointed one of the sepoys to keep awake, and watch the movements of these people.

15. During the night, when we halted, I could not go to sleep for a long time, as I fancied these men also were thugs. However, in spite of endeavours to keep awake, I did fall asleep, but was shortly afterwards roused by a noise like a cock near us. I raised myself, and in a moment one or two of these men were by the side of the sleepers. I shouted loudly, and my uncle jumped up with his tulwar drawn, and made a rush among them; but although this was the work of a moment, still these fiends had managed to strangle, with a silk cord, the brother of Deonarain, and had rendered Tillukdaree senseless. He was just saved by my uncle, who

[1] *Ringāl.—Ed.*

cut down the man standing over him. The other men disappeared in an instant, leaving their bundles of sticks on the ground. However, in this short space of time, those thugs had managed to get my uncle's gold beads, worth Rs. 250, and the short gun of Tillukdaree, who was asleep instead of watching.

16. Afterwards we went to the village just outside which this occurred, and roused up the whole population, but no one showed the least inclination to follow the bloodthirsty murderers. We passed the remainder of the night inside the village, having brought the dead body of Deonarain's brother there also. In the morning we found the pipe-sticks still there, and my uncle sold them to a tobacco merchant for Rs. 46, not however without having a great altercation with the Lumbardar (head man) of the place, who made great endeavours to prove that they belonged to him, by right of their having been left on his ground.

17. We remained a whole day at this place to perform *Kirea-Kirum*[1] (the funeral rites) for poor Ramdeen, Deonarain's brother. We were, to the latter's great comfort, a few miles only from holy Gunga, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the priest cast the ashes into its stream, and thus secure Ramdeen rest in Luchmee Niwás[2] (the Hindoo Heaven). Tillukdaree was so weak from the effect of the thugs' cord round his throat, that he was obliged to hire an *ekka* (native gig), and we proceeded, now a mournful party, on our way.

18. My uncle now allowed no parties of any kind to join us, although several begged hard to do so, as they saw we were armed. During the remainder of our journey, nothing took place, that I remember, worth mentioning, until we arrived at Akbarabad (Agra), where my uncle's regiment was then stationed, and at which place we arrived on the 14th November. When we came near the lines, we met several sepoys of his regiment going down to the river Jumna to bathe. They all embraced him, and, before we arrived at the lines, some thirty

[1] *Kriyā karam* is a general term for "rites and ceremonies."—*Ed.*

[2] *Lachhmī Nivās.*—*Ed.*

men of his company came running out to meet him, and asked a thousand questions. My uncle went to his own house, which had been kept clean and neat by a havildar, who had lived in it during his absence.

19. After bathing, and eating the morning meal, he dressed in his full regimentals, and went to pay his respects to the Adjutant Saheb and the Commanding Officer. He took me with him. I rather dreaded this, as I had never yet seen a Saheb, and imagined they were terrible to look on, and of great stature—I thought at least seven feet high.

20. In those days there were but few Sahebs in Oude—only one or two Saheb Residents in Lucknow, where I had never been. In the villages in my country, most curious ideas existed about them: any one who had chanced to see a Saheb told the most absurd stories of them. In fact, nothing then could be said that would not have been believed. It was reported they were born from an egg which grew on a tree. This idea still exists in remote villages. Had a Mem Saheb[1] come suddenly into some of our villages, if she was young and handsome, she would have been considered as a kind of fairy, and most probably have been worshipped; but should the Mem Saheb have been old and ugly, the whole village would have run away, and have hid in the jungle, considering the apparition as a *yaddoo gurin*[2] (a witch). Therefore my dread of seeing a Saheb for the first time in my life is not to be wondered at.

21. I remember, when I was at a *melā* (fair) at the Tāj Mahal at Agra, hearing the opinion of some country-people who had come from afar off to see the Tāj, about the Saheb *log*. An old woman said she had always been told they were born from eggs, which came on a tree, in a far-off island, but that morning she had seen a Saheb with a *puri*[3] by his side, who she declared was covered with feathers of the most beautiful

[1] English lady.—*Tr.*

[2] *Jādū garnī*, a female magician.—*Ed.*

[3] *Parī*, fairy.—*Ed.*

colours, that her face was as white as milk,[1] and that the Saheb had to keep his hand on her shoulders to prevent her flying away. This she had seen with her own eyes, and it was all true. I am not so ignorant as all this now, but at the time I first came to Agra, I should have believed it. I afterwards frequently saw this Saheb driving his lady about, and she wore a tippet made of peacock's feathers, which the old woman thought were wings.

22. We went to the Adjutant's house, which was four times as big as the Lumbardar's house in my village. The Adjutant was in the verandah, with a long stick, measuring young men, who were recruits. He was very young, not so tall as myself, and had no whiskers or moustache. His face was quite smooth, and looked more like a woman's than a man's. This was the first Saheb I had ever seen, and he did not impress me with much awe, and I could not imagine that he could be much of a Rustoom[2] with his smooth face; for among us, this is looked on as a disgrace—in fact, the smooth-faced soldier is the butt for many jokes. However, he banged these young men's heads against the wall in a manner that showed he had no fear, and from their frightened looks I believe they thought he was going to kill them.

23. After he had finished this measuring, he took notice of my uncle, and to my surprise, spoke in my own language. He seemed glad to see him, asked after his welfare, touched his sword,[3] and then asked who I was. Upon being informed that I had come for service, and was a relation, he told my uncle to go with me to the Doctor Saheb, to whom he wrote a letter. How surprised I was at the rapidity with which he wrote; for in less time than I could have put water to the ink[4] and written one line, he had filled a page, which he then

[1] Chaprasis, etc., will still demand milk from villages "for the ṣāḥib's bath."—*Ed.*

[2] The Hindoo personification of bravery.—*Tr.* Rustam is the Persian Hercules.—*Ed.*

[3] A ceremony of salutation.—*Tr.*

[4] Indian ink?—*Ed.*

doubled up and gave to my uncle, and we went to the Doctor Saheb's house.

24. This was still bigger than the Adjutant's. My uncle told me this Saheb was married, and had several children. The Saheb was at home, and we were ordered into his presence. A chair was given to my uncle, but he took no notice of me, so I sat on the ground. My uncle made me stand up, and afterwards told me it was bad manners before a Saheb to sit down. After reading the note, the Doctor ordered me to strip; but I was so ashamed, I could not move, for there was a Mem Saheb in the room. She was sitting at a table covered with a sheet, feeding two children with eggs—those unclean things.[1] I began to repent having followed my uncle, and remembered the warning of the pundit about being defiled. However, I was ordered sharply to take my clothes off, and both the little white children began—"Papa says you are to take your clothes off, don't you hear—donkey, pig, owl?" And the Doctor Saheb said I was a fool and a jungle man. Then the children said—"Oh! mamma, is he covered with hair?" I was fairly abashed, and ran into the verandah for very shame. My uncle then came to me, and told me not to fear; no harm would be done me. The Doctor then pushed me into an empty room, and examined me, by thrusting his hand into my stomach, which nearly made me sick; opening my eyelids with such violence as made the tears come into my eyes; and thumping my chest. After this, he pronounced me all right and sound, and left off tormenting me, to my great delight.

25. My uncle now went to pay his respects to the Colonel Saheb. We were kept standing outside for an hour, and then ordered to approach. I was now in such a state of alarm, not knowing what next might be done to me, that my legs quite trembled. I fancied that the Commander Saheb must be terrible to look at: he commanded one thousand men; his wish was law. What was my surprise, when I saw an old man, very

[1] Fowls and their eggs are unclean to all Hindus. Water-fowl and their eggs are not unclean except to Brahmins.—*Ed.*

short and stout, without a hair on his head or face, and with skin of a bright red colour. He was smoking a magnificent *hooka*. He got up to welcome my uncle, and, after I was introduced, spoke very kindly to me, told me to be a good boy, and imitate my uncle in everything. I have said this was the first time in my life I had ever seen any Sahebs. I had now seen three; how different they were to my ideas of them! I could not believe that they were so brave; for they were all smaller than my uncle, and did not look half as strong. What a number of curious things they had in their houses, the uses of which I had not the remotest idea of: in one corner of the Colonel's room was a table full of glass cups of all sorts and sizes, in another a stand with seven or eight guns. The walls were all hung round with heads of animals—tigers, barasingers, antelope, and other deer. The Saheb had a tight blue coat on, buttoned up to the throat with big brass buttons, and two lumps of what I then thought were gold on his shoulders. He had white pantaloons on, and long black boots with golden tassels on either side. But although I was not struck with his size or strength, still there was something in his eyes I shall never forget—they were like those of a *bāz*[1] (hawk), and seemed to look through and through one. When we left, my uncle informed me that the Colonel was a renowned *shikaree* (sportsman), a regular Nowsherwan[2] (a man who has killed nine tigers).

26. In a few days I was sent to begin my drill. That day I shall always remember—for is it not impressed on my mind? The parade ground was covered by parties of six or eight men, doing the most extraordinary movements I had ever seen,[3] and the orders were given in a language not one word of which did

[1] *Bāz*, vulgarly any hawk, is properly the female goshawk, the male being called *jurra*.

[2] Considered by the Natives as the height of bravery.—*Tr.* The Persian king Nūshīrvān referred to was renowned for his *justice*. Sītā Rām had evidently never heard of the king and seems to have thought the word was a Hindi compound *nau-sher-wān*, 'a nine-tiger-man.'—*Ed.*

[3] Probably the extension motions and the goose-step.

I understand. I felt inclined to laugh, and was lost in astonishment at the sight. However, a violent wrench of my ear by the drill havildar brought me to my senses. I had to go to this exercise for many months, but one day I chanced to forget how to do something, and was so severely cuffed on the head by the drill havildar that I became senseless, and fell down. I complained of this to my uncle, who was very angry with the havildar, and from that day, although he never dared strike me again, he bullied me in every way, and abused me very much.

Now, as I had taken great pains to learn my duties, I felt this very much; and I had almost made up my mind to run away. The drill havildar told the Adjutant I was *mugra* (obstinate) and stupid, and that I should never make a soldier.

27. I spoke to my uncle about the treatment I received, and told him I repented of ever having come with him. But he encouraged me; and the Colonel Saheb came one day to look at the recruits, and I managed to do my drill so as to please him very much. He ordered the Adjutant to put me through the whole, who, before him, said I was fitted to join the ranks. I so longed to wear a red coat, and to have a musket of my own; besides which, I had been only eight months at my drill, and out of a *gulla*[1] (party) of 78 recruits, many of whom had begun their drill before I came to the regiment, I was the only one selected to join the ranks. Few were sent to do this, except in time of war, till they had been at drill for one year, and often for longer than this even.

CHAPTER III.

28. I took my place as a regular sepoy in my uncle's company, No. 2, eight months from the day I had entered the Sirkar's service. But my annoyances did not cease here; for through some influence of the drill havildar's, the European

1 *Galla* is *properly* a herd or flock of animals only.—*Ed.*

serjeant of my company took a dislike to me, and was continually finding fault, and getting me punished. I found out I had never given the usual present to the drill havildar when I had passed my drill, and I determined now never to do so after his bad treatment of me. This fee was Rs. 16, some five or six of which went to the European serjeant of the company the recruit was posted to. At this time there was a European serjeant with each company of sepoys: some of these knew our language pretty well, and generally were very kind to us, but many of them could not express themselves, or make the men understand their meaning, and these sort of men had recourse to low abuse, and were in the habit of striking the sepoys, and cuffing them about. Numerous complaints were made to the Adjutant, but he nearly always took the part of the serjeant against the sepoy, and very little or no redress at all was obtained.

29. At first I found it very disagreeable wearing the red coat; for although this was open in front, it was quite tight under the arms. The shako was very heavy, and hurt my head; but it was rather handsome. After a time, I grew accustomed to all this, but always found a great relief when I could wear my own loose dress. The uniform of the Saheb *log* was very tight, and prevented the free use of the arms and legs. The musket was very heavy, and for a long time hurt my shoulder when carrying it; and the pouch belt and knapsack were a load for a coolie.

30. There were eight English officers in my regiment; but the Captain of my company was a real Saheb, like what I had imagined all Sahebs to be. His name was Burumpeel (Blomfield perhaps). He was six feet three inches in height, his chest like Hunooman's,[1] and his strength enormous. He used often to wrestle with the sepoys, and when in the *akhara*[2] (wrestling arena) he was the universal admiration of all the men. He had learnt all the *penchs* (throws), and no sepoy

[1] *Hanumān*, the Monkey god, noted for his strength.—*Ed.*

[2] *Akhāṛā.—Ed.*

could ever overcome him. This officer was always known among ourselves as the *Pulwan*[1] Saheb (the wrestler). Nearly all our officers had some name by which they were known among ourselves: one was the "Nawab" Saheb; another the "Oont"[2] Saheb, because he had a long neck; another was "Damn" Saheb, because he always said that word whenever he gave an order. Some of the officers were very young—only boys; when not on the parade ground, they were always out hunting and shooting.

31. The Colonel Saheb had four elephants, and had parties often to hunt the tiger. At the time I am now writing about, tigers abounded in the jungles round Agra, and near Bhurtpore, and on the road to Muttoora. These jungles now are all cleared away, and there is not a tiger to be heard of; but in those days Colonel Estuart Saheb seldom returned without two tigers. He was well known all round, and the villagers came even from 15 *coss* off to inform him where the game was, being quite sure of getting a good reward. Nowadays the Sahebs do not go out all day in the hot weather; but formerly they bore the heat as well as, if not better than, us black men.

32. Most of our officers had Hindustanee women living with them, and these had great influence in the regiment; and they always pretended to have more than they really had, in order that they might be bribed to ask the Sahebs for indulgences for the sepoys. The sepoys themselves were sometimes instrumental in inducing the officers to take into their service some of their female relations, but these were men of low caste, or else Mahomedans.[3]

33. The Sahebs then could speak our language much better than they can now, and mixed more with us. The officers have now to pass (the P., H. or P.), still they do not understand our language so well, although they have to read books. I

[1] *Pahlwān*, a champion, athlete, wrestler.—*Ed.*

[2] *Ūṅṭ*, camel.—*Ed.*

[3] Sītā Rām, a Hindu, never loses a chance of having a hit at the Muslims.—*Ed.*

seldom have seen a Saheb who could read a book or a letter after he had been before the committee. The only language they learn is the low language,[1] which they hear from their servants, and which is not fit to be used before Ameers (gentlemen). In those days the Sahebs often gave nautches[2] to the regiment, and attended all games; they had the men out with them while hunting[3]—at least all those who liked to go: since then, they seldom attend nautches, for their Padre Sahebs have told them it is wrong, and they have done, and still are doing, many things to estrange the Saheb from the sepoy. When I was a sepoy, the Captain of my company would have some of his men at his house all day, and talked to them. Of course many went with the intent of gaining something for themselves—to induce him to recommend them to the Colonel for promotion, or this or that appointment in the regiment; but numbers went because they liked the Saheb, who always treated them as if they were his own children. I am a very old man now, and my words are true; I have lived to see great changes in the Saheb *log*; I now have seen that many officers only speak to their men when obliged, and evidently show that it is irksome to them, and try to get rid of them as soon as possible. One Saheb told he never knew what to say. The Sahebs always knew what to say, and how to say it, when I was young. If I speak boldly, your Lordship will grant me pardon.

34. The lallcoatee[4] Sahebs (the officers of the Royal army), since the mutiny, do not treat us in the same way they used to do. I am fully aware of the execration my unworthy brethren deserve for their brutal conduct during the mutiny; but they rather deserve this from their own officers than the

[1] *Pajee bolee.—Tr.* Properly *pājiyoṅ kī bolī.—Ed.*

[2] This custom lingered on in the Panjab Frontier Force till a comparatively recent date.—*Ed.*

[3] Sepoys used then to keep greyhounds and hawks and many regiments had a bobbery pack. The custom had not quite died out as late as 1885. —*Ed.*

[4] *Lāl kurtī*, "red-coat."—*Ed.*

Royal army officers. I remember, even when it was well known I was one of the force at the relief at Lucknow, I was called a "d—d black pig" by more than one Royal officer; and I remember, on the day when I made chuppaties for the officers of the 13th and 41st foot, in Cabool, "jack sepoy was a d—d good fellow." I have not served forty-eight years with English officers without knowing the meaning of all this. It is greatly to be attributed to hastiness of temper;[1] but who can combat against fate?

35. I always was good friends with the English soldiery, and they formerly used to treat the sepoy with great kindness. Did we not do all their hard work? We took all their guards in the heat; we stood sentry over their rum casks; we gave them of our own food. Well, these soldiers are a different caste now—neither so fine nor so tall as they were: they seldom can speak one word of our language, except abuse;—if they could learn to ask for things as quickly as they learn this, they would be apt scholars indeed. I have observed that a new regiment, both officers and men, always abuse us black men more than an old regiment. The 17th foot called us *bahies*[2] (brothers); the 16th lancers never walked near our *chulas* (cooking places), nor spat on our food; and we were together for years. I have heard it said—and once I asked a Colonel Saheb, who could understand me a little, if it were true,—that the Sirkar's best soldiers were all killed by the Russ cannon. He told me very few were killed, but that thousands died of cold and sickness, as they did in Cabool. Still I know it was thought, during the mutiny, that the Russ had killed all the Sirkar's soldiers, and that only boys could be found in Belait.[3] Some of this is true, for I have seen only boys in many red-coated regiments of late years.

36. A short time after I became a regular sepoy, it was

[1] *Julturungee.—Tr.* Perhaps a corruption of *jald-ranjī* vulgar for *zūd-ranjī.—Ed.*

[2] *Bhā,ī.—Ed.*

[3] *Wilāyat*, a foreign country, hence Kabul, hence England.—*Ed.*

talked of that the Company were going to take Nepaul from Amur Singh Tappah, and our officers were full of hopes of going with the army, which was collecting at Muttoora.[1] In a short time the order came, and we marched from Agra to Muttoora in two days, and were attached to General Gilspy's column. There was also another army, under General Loneyackty.[2] We marched till we came to Deyra[3] near the hills, without seeing the enemy; but we heard they were all collected at Nalapanee,[4] a fort on a hill. The Goorkas were always considered very brave soldiers and their knives were much dreaded, as a touch from one of them was certain death. Our column was ordered to march on this fort. The road was all through deep jungle, and several of my comrades were wounded by arrows, which came from the jungle without any noise, and no one was ever seen. Many of the sepoys said it was the work of *jinns*, and magic. Vollies of musketry were sometimes fired by us when the arrows came thick; but so dense was the jungle that it was never ascertained if any of the enemy were killed or not.

37. As we neared the fort, the Brigadier Saheb ordered four columns for the attack. These were to approach by different roads; but the paths were so bad and steep, one column came up before the others, and was exposed to so heavy a fire, that, leaving many dead, they had to retreat. This disheartened the sepoys very much, and seeing the *gora log* (Europeans) running back made it worse. At this period General Gilspy led a European regiment to the attack, and even with all his valour (for he was real Roostum) he was two or three times beaten back. He was on foot, and hurrahing the men on, when in an instant he fell back dead; and then we retreated again, my regiment covering the retreat. We fell back one mile, and halted four or five days, until the big guns should come up from Delhi, under Captain Hallow Saheb.

1 *Mathurā.—Ed.* 2 Ochterlony.—*Tr.*

3 Dehra for Dehra Dun ?—*Ed.*

4 *Nālāpānī*, three miles east of Dehra Dun ?—*Ed.*

38. The walls of the fort were not very high, and the officers of my regiment wanted to try ladders, which we soon made of the jungle trees; but General Maulay Saheb would not hear of the attempt being made, as the losses had already been so terrible. In my regiment 48 men had been killed. The *gora log* lost nearly two whole companies;[1] still they never became dispirited, but went again and again at the fort: they were like young cocks.

39. The sepoys were rather sad; but when the guns came up, courage came into their breasts again. The walls were battered, and great holes made, and another assault took place: but although we all pushed on as hard as we could—the Europeans running up to the breaches—still we were driven back; no one could enter the fort. The flights of arrows in our faces put many men in fear; more than the matchlock balls, which could not be seen. The Mussalmans in the ranks were more disheartened, for they said as three attempts had failed, Allah was against them.

40. However, next morning, when a grand attack on all sides of the fort was ordered, we advanced nearer and nearer; and no arrows or firing coming from the place, a drummer *chokra* (boy) ran up and went in, then called out that the fort was empty. The Nepaul *log* had all escaped through the jungle, without our knowing a word of it, or hearing a sound. They took advantage of a storm which only lasted half an hour. Now was the time the Europeans were sullen, for they were vexed that the enemy had deceived them. I escaped without a wound, but my Captain Saheb received an arrow in the chest, and on account of the broad point it was difficult to be taken out, and the Doctor Saheb said the Captain would die if it was extracted. The Saheb suffered great pain, and in the agony of this he pulled the head of the arrow out himself, and froth and blood came out of the wound. He nearly bled to death. I never expected to see my Captain Saheb recover. He was so loved by the men of his own company, and in the

[1] 53rd Foot.—*Tr.*

regiment was such a great favourite, that his absence was hard to bear—the regiment had lost its champion, Burumpeel Saheb was sent to England.

41. At this time a new General came, Martaindale Saheb, to take command. The enemy had all gone to another fort, Zytuck Ghuree, and the army was ordered to march on that place. Here again the Europeans rushed on like tigers, and fought like madmen; but we were all driven back, with considerable loss. My uncle was also wounded by a matchlock ball in the knee, which gave him very great pain. I was allowed to attend upon him in the hospital tent. The Mussalman sepoys now all said the war was an unlucky one—it would never succeed; but my uncle said that the Saheb log and Europeans always fought the better for being beaten at first.

42. The next day news came that the Sirkar's army, which had gone round by Gooruckpoor and Betia,[1] had been destroyed by the Nepaul army. The Sahebs began to look anxious; and though our General told us "several companies had been cut off, and not the whole army destroyed," still most believed the first news was true; my uncle was the only one who credited the General's account. The army now was in a sad state, and not much fit for fighting; most of the men who had been wounded died from green fever. We had some 580 men disabled. The people thought that the company's *ikbāl* (fortune) was going away, and several Rajahs and Nawabs began to take advantage of this feeling, and collected forces against the Sirkar. Our army retired to Dehra to rest a while. The enemy did not annoy us, for being hill men, they were afraid to come into the open country. In a few weeks, news came that Loneyackty Saheb had beaten Amur Tappah, and that peace was made. Our force then marched to Saharunpore where there was a large fort.

43. The Sirkar let Amur Tappah go to his own country, because he was a brave man. The English respect brave men, and do not kill them. This is curious: for is not a brave man

[1] *Betiā—Ed.*

the most dangerous enemy?[1] As was expected by everyone, from the Sirkar letting Amur Tappah go, war broke out again in a few months. I could never understand the Sahebs quite: I have seen them spare the lives of their foes when wounded; I have seen one officer spare a wounded man, who shot him through the back when he turned to go away; another Saheb I saw spare a wounded Afghan, and even offer him some water to drink, and the man cut the Saheb's leg with his tulwar, so as to lame him for life.[2] "The wounded snake can kill as long as life remains." If your enemy is not worth killing, he is not worth fighting with.

CHAPTER IV.

44. My regiment was ordered to join General Loneyackty's force by double marches. One night, when we were near a place called Peithan, the alarm was sounded, and a dreadful uproar took place in camp, which at first no one could account for. A herd of wild elephants came and attacked our elephants, which all broke loose, and ran among the tents, uttering dreadful screams and loud roars, upsetting numbers of tents, and trampling to death one European soldier, and two Sahebs' servants. The Europeans wanted to open fire on the elephants, but it is was impossible to tell which were the wild ones or which were the Commissariat ones. The officers had great difficulty in preventing this: if it had taken place, no one could tell the damage which might have occurred, as it was dark, and the balls would have killed numbers of our own men, without doubt. After a while the wild elephants moved off, and quiet was somewhat restored. The mahouts succeeded in recovering all their elephants, except two, which were never heard of again. I was that night on sentry, and never shall forget it: never had I been so frightened before, as every moment I

[1] At the Delhi manœuvres of 1885 some Sikh native officers asked the Editor why the Sirkar did not seize the opportunity to imprison a certain Russian general who was present there as a guest.—*Ed.*

[2] Captain Hopper, 31st N. I.—*Tr.*

expected to be trampled on, yet dare not leave my post. My uncle also acknowledged he was afraid, for he had not yet recovered from his wound so as to be able to run. The ropes of one tent became entangled with the feet of one of the elephants, and the tent was torn down before the men could rush out. They were enfolded in it, and dragged like fish in a net for some way. The sides of the tent prevented the men being much hurt, but they were frightened, as I never saw men before, and were greatly laughed at when it was known next morning the new way their tent had been struck. I saw the European who had been killed: his chest was broken in, and his face was black, and the eyes nearly starting out;—it was a woful sight.

45. Our column joined the other army near Cheriaghat,[1] where the enemy was posted; we marched round towards Muckwanpoorah,[2] and two battles were fought, in which the Nepaul log were severely beaten, and the village of Beechakoor taken by storm. The Nepaul people thought Katmandoo[3] would be captured, as we were not more than 15 *coss* off, and they sent *dhawuniyas*[4] (envoys) with flags of truce, and peace was proclaimed. The terms of this peace were very hard, and the Company Bahadoor took large provinces from the Nepaul log as security, and also gave back some small places the enemy seemed to value. This war lasted only a few weeks.

46. The Sirkar gave back his lands to Rajah Pertaub Singh, which had been seized by the Nepaulese. As long as our garrisons remained at the different forts, the Rajah was ruler; but as these were soon removed, he was again driven out of his possessions, and was obliged to fly for his life to Bettiah. I never heard that the Sirkar gave him any assistance after this; some people said it was not given, because he promised to raise a regiment for the Sirkar and failed to do so.

47. My regiment was after this war ordered to return to Mattoora, but had not been there long, before it was sent to join the large army under the Governor-General Hastings him-

[1] *Cheṛiāghāt.—Ed.*
[2] *Mākhanpūrā.—Ed.*
[3] *Kāṭāmunḍū?—Ed.*
[4] *Dhāwaniyā*, H., "a runner."—*Ed.*

self, which was now assembling in different parts of India, against the Pindarees—a set of mounted robbers, who seldom fought a battle if they could by any means avoid it. but marched about the Deccan and other provinces, and plundered helpless towns, exacted large sums of money from the *mahajuns* (bankers), took off with them the best-looking women, and cut and maimed people, regardless of age and sex. No place, no person was safe; one day this village would be looted, another day a town 40 *coss* off. Sometimes a thousand horsemen would appear before a town, and exact a sum of money; as much as two lakhs (£20,000) have thus been carried off. If the robbers imagined, from the way this was paid (that is, if it were got without much difficulty), that the place was rich; and contained much more ready money, they would leave at a gallop, halt twenty miles off, and then return at night, and loot the place of everything of value which could possibly be carried off on horseback; killing every man, woman, or child who made the least resistance; and very often took off the head man, or the richest man in the town, in the hope of thus getting a high ransom. Some exorbitant sum was generally demanded, and the feelings of his relations played on by sending in his ears, his fingers, or hands, with threats that if the ransom was not quickly paid the head would be sent next.

48. Hindoostan was at this time tormented by demons from the lowest hill. I cannot describe the horrors of those days: Ram, Ram, Seetaram—may they never come again! The very name of Pindaree, or of Cheetoo,[1] their Chief, was accursed. Merchants trembled when they heard it; young women wept;—no one felt safe. These robbers were composed of many kinds of people; and young men of noble family, but of no wealth, joined them; but they were chiefly men from Southern India. These Pindarees always bribed the big Rajahs or Nawabs, and many of them also shared their loot, even when it was plunder taken from towns or villages of the Rajah himself. When sore

[1] *Chītū.—Ed.*

pressed, these robbers could always find shade in some territory friendly to them.

49. I now considered myself an experienced soldier, as I had suffered defeats, and had helped to win victories; I had served with Sahebs, and white soldiers; and, in my opinion, the reason that the English are invincible is, they do not care for defeat: four times have I seen a European regiment driven back with terrible slaughter, yet their fifth attack was as fierce as the first. A wonderful thing is, they do not get in confusion when their leader is killed—another officer takes his place, and the men obey him just the same. Now, in a Native army, if the Sirdar or leader is killed, the whole army falls into confusion, and generally takes to flight—the men will not follow the next leader. And the chief reason for this great difference is, the Rajahs or Nawabs generally fight for their own benefit, and they collect all the plunder in their own *tosahkanas*[1] (coffers), to spend upon themselves and their favourites alone, not for the good of their subjects; so of course the people do not care about the war, any further than by it there is the chance of getting plunder, or of rising to power. Another reason is, few Princes of Hindoostan ever regularly pay their troops, and when an army is allowed to pay itself by plunder, there can be no real discipline, although every individual may be brave. Princes seldom grant pensions to the families of those killed in their service, and care but little about the soldier when once he is disabled and of no further use to them. The Sirkar's officers fight, but their whole object is not plunder alone—the strict rules of the army prevent this to any great extent; they receive their pay regularly, and they feel sure they will get it; also that if their *kismut* (fate) is, that they are to be wounded, they will still be cared for, and oftentimes rewarded.

50. As to the white soldiers, I hardly know what they love fighting so much for, unless it be for grog; they would fight ten battles running for one lota full of *daroo*[2] (spirit). Their

[1] *Tosha-khāna.—Ed.*

[2] *Dārū.—Ed.*

pay is nothing; it cannot be for that. They also love plunder, but I have seen white soldiers give a cap full of rupees for one bottle of brandy. I have been told that the Belaitee hakeems (English doctors) have discovered some essence, which is put in the European soldiers' grog, and that great care has to be taken not to put too much in, or the men would all kill themselves in battle by rashness. I know water has always to be mixed with their spirit,[1] although they themselves do not know it. Whenever I have seen them discouraged or fighting without heart, it was always when they were deprived of their usual allowance of spirit. The Sikh soldiers who drink English liquor say they have no fear when they can get ration rum, but that the country spirit burns up their livers and makes them fools, not brave. I am sure there must be some sort of *umrit panee* (water of life) in it, as I have seen men wounded, and all but dead, come to life again after having some given them. Be this as it may, there is something very extraordinary in it, I am certain, because I know European soldiers worship it, give their lives for it, and lose their lives by it. I have spoken to Doctor Sahebs about the subject, and they themselves told me it was in their own language called water of fire, water of life, etc.

51. My regiment was ordered to join the headquarters of the *burra lad*[2] (Marquis of Hastings), and we proceeded by forced marches into Bundelkund. There was a very large army, at least one lakh of soldiers. The work the troops had to perform was very severe, marching and counter-marching in a country where there were no roads. News came of a body of Pindarees being here one day, there the next; detachments were sent after them to try and cut them off, but seldom with success. The movements of the army may be compared to a game of *sutrunj*[3] (chess).

[1] The rum supplied to British troops is, or was, above proof and it was the duty of the orderly officer, on the march, to see that the proper amount of water was added.—*Ed.*

[2] *Barā Lāṭ*, Viceroy, and *Chhoṭā Lāṭ*, a Lieut.-Governor.—*Ed.*

[3] *Shaṭranj.*—*Ed.*

52. One day, however, we by accident came upon a large body of the enemy, who had just dismounted, and were in as perfect ignorance of our approach as we were of their being near. We got close enough to deliver several vollies, but they were off at full gallop down places a foot-soldier dare not go. Some thirty or forty were killed and wounded, and several horses captured.

53. My company was sent after some of them who were dismounted, and whilst running after one man my foot caught in a bush, and I was thrown headlong down a steep ravine, and remained quite stunned at the bottom. When I came to myself again, I saw a man with a matchlock taking aim at me, not twelve yards off. I covered him with my musket, but *taubah*[1] *taubah*![1] (alas! alas!) the flint had been knocked out by my fall, and of course the musket would not go off. The Pindaree got round me, and fired down on me, sending a bullet into my back near the left shoulder. I rolled down further into the ravine, and remember nothing until it was quite dark, when I awoke with a burning thirst, and found myself covered with blood, not only from the wound, but from the thorns which had lacerated me. My face and hands were dreadfully cut. I was unable to move, and lay there till dawn in terrible pain. I then managed to crawl up the bank, but was so exhausted I fell backwards again. This made my wound bleed afresh. However, this loss of blood did not weaken me so much as I expected. I dragged myself a little further, and I now began to think death was near, as my thirst was maddening.

54. Just as I had given up all hopes of life, the tinkle of a cattle bell struck on my ear, and this sign of life in this desert place gave me fresh vigour. In about an hour or so I came up to a herd of buffaloes under the care of a boy and a girl, who, the instant they saw me, disappeared in the thick jungle, although I called to them in the name of Bughwan (God) to

[1] An unusual expression for a Brahmin of Oudh. He ought to have said *Rām*! *Rām*!—*Ed.*

give me some water. In about an hour, the girl appeared again, and seeing I could not walk, came nearer. I spoke to her, but all she answered was "*Hau hau!*"[1] I could not understand her, nor she me. I tried to make her know I wanted water by every sign I could think of, and at last she seemed to understand, and pointed to a tree. I crawled to this tree, and there was a small kutcha[2] well, from which the water for the cattle was drawn. She drew me some, which I drank; but it was warm and bitter, like medicine. However, it gave me life, and I washed my wound as well as I could. It was no use talking to the girl, as we could not understand each other; so I endeavoured to make my meaning known by signs; but she became frightened, and ran off again into the jungle.

55. I laid near this well all that day, and in the evening four men came, evidently sent by the girl, as they approached me with great caution. After a great deal of *bukka bukke*[3] (jabbering), they led me to the village, which consisted of a few huts made of branches of trees, and thatched over with broad leaves. They were not unkind to me, but I could not eat their food, as they were men of low caste; their occupation appeared to be iron smelters. I managed to make one of them point out the road, and I inquired where the Sirkar's army was. I understood him to say it had moved a long way off, but in which direction I could not make out. I remained with these people two days, and subsisted on some dried *chuppaties* I had in my bag, with some milk I was allowed to draw myself.

56. The third day one of the men led me to a beaten track, and pointed to a large tree some *coss* off, and also to both sides of the road; at the same time making a motion like arrows flying from a bow—which I took to be a warning to look out for my life. I found a thin piece of white stone which gave out sparks, and fixed it in my musket; but I was too weak to have fired it, so that in spite of my weapons I was quite defenceless. I offered the man one rupee, but he shook his head, and pointed

[1] Yes, yes.—*Tr.* Perhaps *hāṅ hāṅ*.—*Ed.*

[2] *Kachchā.*—*Ed.*

[3] Vulgar for *bak bak.*—*Ed.*

to his stomach, and made signs which I understood to mean that the money would not pass in that country. I think, from what I afterwards found out, these men were afraid of having any of the Sirkar's money in their possession, as in those days, had it been known, it would have been quite enough to bring the vengeance of the Pindarees on them, which was so frightful, that those poor wretches, in a far-off jungle, dare not do anything to annoy them in any way.

57. The men left me on the road, and I made for the large tree and by help of my musket crawled along. But I proceeded very slowly, as the pain in my chest was so great. I was attacked with a cough, and spat up clots of blood; which frightened me so much, that I gave up all hopes of life. Towards evening, I reached the tree, under which was a large tomb, and an attendant *byragee*[1] (or fakeer). He addressed me in my own language, to my great delight, although it was to tell me to go away and not trouble him. I lay down near him, and related my tale of distress, and his heart began to soften towards me; but he informed me that if the Pindarees saw me, or knew that he had rendered a sepoy of the Sirkar's any assistance, they would spear both him and myself. He made me a poultice of *neem* leaves and washed my wound, which gave me great relief. My being a Brahmin, also, had great effect on him. He hid my uniform and musket in the jungle, and sprinkled me with mirtika[2] (red ochre). From the position which he had chosen for his *arsun*[3] (seat), he was enabled to see a good way up and down the road; so, when any one approached, I had time to conceal myself. Besides a few herds of cattle, and their keepers, no one came near the place for five days. I could move a little now, but the ball had lodged in the muscles of my back, and the wound began to suppurate, giving me great pain.

58. On the sixth day, a cloud of dust was seen in the dis-

1 *Bairāgī* is a Hindu ascetic who has renounced the world.—*Ed.*

2 *Mirtikā*, H., dried and powdered earth, generally from the Ganges: it is used for sprinkling.—*Ed.*

3 *Āsan.*—*Ed.*

tance, moving quicker than it usually does when raised by cattle. The fakeer bade me hide inside the tomb, which had a large slab of stone at its mouth, all covered with *mirtika*. I crept in, and was nearly suffocated, although the sides of the tomb had small open spaces in them. But my life depended upon my being perfectly quiet. In a few minutes a party of about thirty horsemen came up, and asked for water, and then questioned the fakeer if he had seen any Feringhees, or their sepoys, or any of their own people. His answers appeared to satisfy them, for they dismounted, and began to prepare some food they had brought with them.

59. They now entered into conversation with the fakeer, and told him how they were hemmed in on every side, and chased here and there, like *teeturs*[1] (partridges); that they had come forty *coss* since the day before, and that it was their intention to join their leader, Kurreem, who was going to take refuge in the Gwalior territory. They also said their numbers were much reduced, for at first they had amounted to near two lakhs, but that now they were dwindled down to some few thousands; that their leaders had deserted them in the hour of peril, and Cheetoo and Kurreem were both seeking their own safety in flight. Two of their party then came and laid[2] down on the shady side of the tomb, and I was in terrible dread that they might hear me move or breathe. As the sun became hot, the inside of the tomb was like a bread oven—what I suffered was nearly as bad as death; but about mid-day, to my great relief they mounted again, and told the fakeer that "Teekumghur" was the password to give any of their party who might come that way, and they disappeared in the jungle. After waiting half an hour, I came out of my living tomb, more dead than alive. How I thanked the great Sita that I was preserved from death!

60. Two days more passed, and another cloud of dust was seen coming the opposite way. I ran into the tomb again; but this time it was the Company Bahadoor's sowars, and when I

[1] *Tītar*, the grey partridge.—*Ed.*

heard them talking about the Lad Saheb, and General Esmith Saheb (Smith), I knew I was safe, and came out of the tomb, and made myself known to the Russaldar commanding the party, who at first would not believe my story, until the fakeer brought my uniform and musket out of the jungle. They gave me a tattoo to ride on, and bidding farewell to my kind protector, and leaving three rupees in his gourd, I went on with them.

61. It chanced that this party belonged to a corps which was with my column, and in three days I was in the arms of my uncle, who mourned me as dead. I had been absent thirteen days, and no one in my company knew anything about me. Some said they had seen my body, others said I had been captured by the Pindarees. I was so weak, thin, and exhausted, I had to go to hospital, and the Colonel Saheb came often to see me, and hear my story; and the other officers were very kind.

62. The Doctor Saheb cut the ball out of my back, and I vomited a quantity of blood, which gave me great relief. Every day now I got better and stronger, but I could not bear the shock of a musket, and was of no use as a fighting man; so I was made the Colonel's orderly till such time as I could be sent home. By this I escaped carrying a musket and taking sentry duty. The Adjutant Saheb, who had never been very friendly to me before, now became very kind to me. He told me he was very much pleased that, after all my sufferings, I had not lost my musket and ammunition, but brought them back all safe. It is true this may have been the reason but I think being taken so much notice of by the Colonel Saheb and the other officers, had something to do with his sudden alteration of behaviour towards me.

CHAPTER V.

63. In this Pindaree war, it was remarkable that the enemy always possessed much better information as to the movements of the Sirkar's army than the Sirkar did of theirs; any movement on our part, if it was conducted with the utmost secrecy

even, was immediately known by the enemy. Spies were plentifully employed on our side, and were allowed to help themselves out of a large bag of rupees, when they gave truthful information—which, however, was very rare. I feel certain they always informed the enemy of our proceedings, and only told of a party of Pindarees being near after they had warned them of the approach of our force; consequently they had always time to escape. The troops would march with all speed on the place the enemy were reported to be at: it was always true enough the Pindarees had been there; all the villagers bore witness to this, and the spies got the credit of being very good ones;—but there is one thing certain, the enemy never were at the spot when the Sirkar's troops arrived. Whenever our army did fall in with the enemy, it was by mere accident, and when no information whatever had been given, or when the spies asserted there were no Pindarees within twenty *coss*.

64. I should have thought that everyone would have been glad to have given assistance to the Sirkar, in order to help them to exterminate these low-bred hounds: but such was not the case; and numbers of Rajahs and Princes gave them assistance, some openly, some by stealth. All the people of Bundelkund were in their cause. This was not wonderful; for if they only had horses, they would all have been Pindarees also—a Boondela being, if possible, a greater villain, and lover of plunder, than a Mahratta. It used to perplex the Generals and Colonels to hear that a body of these robbers had found refuge in the territories of some Rajah, two of whose towns it was well known these men had looted a few days before; but I have explained the reason of this already.

65. Detachments marched at all hours of the night, without knowing which road they were to take, and the guides were then ordered to show the way to such and such a place. These men, unless the eye of a *bāz* (hawk) was always on them, generally managed to escape in some dense part of the jungle, like wild animals; or when some Saheb, more clever than another, had the guides led by a rope, these men always showed the wrong

road, or pretended not to understand what was said to them. Shooting them had no effect in preventing this; their sympathies were with the robbers, and they hated the Sirkar. I have heard also, that the frightful punishments the Pindarees inflicted on any one they suspected of giving information or assistance to their enemies, was one reason: burning the eyes out with a heated spear blade, cutting the ears, nose, and lips off, and other horrible mutilations, were the common modes of revenge. We sepoys hated them most cordially, and from our being servants of the Sirkar, they never spared us.

66. At this time the fortunes of these robbers seemed to rise a little again, as we heard that the Sirdars of the Mahratta army had agreed to help them: but the *ickbal* (fortune) of the Company Sirkar was irresistible; the Mahratta army was beaten on the Tipra[1] Nuddee, near Oojein, a long way from where we were. The news soon spread all over Bundelkund, and bands of Pindarees were flying in small parties over the country. They tried to get into Maharajah Scindia's territories near Rampoora,[2] but they were met at several places and cut up; besides which, numbers of their former friends now left them. When they saw the Sirkar victorious everywhere, and they could not count upon information now as formerly, their fear was like that of the deer before the cheeta. Kureem was defeated, and at last he gave himself up to a General Saheb; and Cheetoo, the other Chief, ran off into the deep jungles, and it is said was killed by a snake.[3]

67. The power of these robbers was now completely broken, and the name of the Company Bahadoor became great. After this, the columns of the army broke up, and my battalion was sent to Ajmeer; but I was attached to a regiment returning to Agra, and got permission to visit my home for six months on sick leave.

68. During this campaign, not more than twenty men were

[1] *Siprā* ?—*Ed.* [2] *Rāmpūr.*—*Ed.*

[3] "His mangled body was found in a tiger's lair with his sword and a letter-case full of papers; *vide* Heber Lectures, vol. ii, p. 551.—*Ed.*

killed in my regiment, but one hundred and eighty died of *hijah*[1] (cholera) and fever, and nearly one hundred more were ruined in health, and only fit to go to their homes. Of the camp followers, servants, etc., it was said seven hundred died of this *hijah*, which was a new disease and had not been seen in these parts previously. The Europeans and Sahebs also died of it, and their Doctor Sahebs never had seen it before, and knew no cure for it. It was more deadly than small-pox, and a direful disease.

69. I arrived, with the regiment I was attached to, all safe at Agra, where I bought a tattoo for eleven rupees, and, in company with four or five other sepoys, who had got leave also, I set off for my village. I reached my home early one morning before it was light, and waited outside till daybreak. When my mother came out to draw water, I called to her, but she did not know me in the least, for during the four or five years I had been absent, I had grown from a boy into a man. I had also whiskers and moustache,[2] and considered myself rather a handsome sepoy. My mother seemed so alarmed when I spoke to her, that I also became frightened; but, afterwards, my father told me that my uncle had written home to say I had been killed, so my mother thought at first it was my *bhoot* (ghost).

70. My father now came out of his house, and I had the pleasure of finding none of my relations had died during my absence; everything was just the same as when I left home. I had also the satisfaction of experiencing what *sook*[3] (ease) was for the first time for many months. I rapidly became better in health, and I had my ambition gratified by sitting on the same *chubootra* (seat in front of a house) where my uncle had sat, and of telling my own stories and escapes to a crowd of the villagers of an evening, who came to listen and gossip, as they had done before, when my uncle was there. I soon became a man of some importance in my village. The old Pundit was

[1] *Haiza.—Ed.* [2] Indians develop very rapidly.—*Ed.*

[3] *Sukh*, the opposite of *dukh.—Ed.*

also alive, and his greetings were most hearty, and he prided himself on the power of the charm he had given me when I first left home.

71. My mother, during my absence, had arranged a *lugun*[1] (betrothal) between me and the daughter of a zemindar (land-holder; a sort of head farmer). You must know, my Lord, that this is done by our parents, and that, until the night of our marriage we are not allowed to see the faces of our wives. I did not much wish to be married while I remained a soldier; but it was my fate, so what could I do? The Pundit fixed the lucky day, which was six months off. During this time I frequently tried to get a glimpse of my wife. I asked her *dhaee*[2] (nurse) about her; but all the information I got was that her neck was like a dove's, her eyes like a deer's, her feet like the lotus leaf and that she was consumed with love for me; and with this I must rest satisfied. I never saw her, except once, when she got into a *ruth*[3] (bullock carriage); but this was a distance, and her face was not visible. My mother and the Pundit told me my wife's *dueja*[4] (marriage portion) was quite sufficient for me to live on, and that I need remain a servant of the Company Bahadoor's no longer, and she nearly persuaded me to write to my uncle and get my discharge. My father was not so anxious for my marriage, because the *nikahana* (marriage fees to the priest) would cost him so much money, and he also did not wish me to leave the service yet, as the lawsuit about the mango plantation had not been settled, and he was very anxious, now I had come home, that I should be his *mooktear*[5] (agent) in the court, as, from my being in the Sirkar's service, it would give me superiority over the other claimant, who was now urging his suit.

72. I employed my time, as formerly, in attending to my father's farm, and my wound very soon healed; but whenever

[1] *Lagan* is an auspicious point of time, and hence the ceremony of fixing the date of marriage of the bridegroom's party.—*Ed.*

[2] *Dā,ī.—Ed.*

[3] *Rath*, a bullock-carriage and also a war-chariot.—*Ed.*

[4] *Dejā* or *daijā.—Ed.*

[5] *Mukhtār.—Ed.*

rain came it gave me great pain. One evening, when I was relating the circumstance of my being wounded, I chanced to mention the incident of the little girl who was keeping the cows in the jungle having given me some water, which had saved my life; when a Brahmin priest, who was listening, declared that, from my own showing, the girl must have been of the Doom caste (one lower than a sweeper), and that from my having drunk the water drawn by her, I was defiled. In vain I said the water was drunk out of my own lota; he talked so loud, and reviled me so much, that it was known all over the village in no time. Everyone now shunned me; no one would now smoke with me. I applied to Dhuleepram, the Pundit, who, having heard all the case, considered my caste was broken, and he could no longer associate with me. I was not allowed even to enter my father's house; and I became miserable.

73. Through the influence of my father, a *punchayet* (a court composed of five persons) was assembled, who sat in judgment upon me, and after the priests had performed many ceremonies over me, and ordered me to fast many days—after which I had to give them feasts, and offer gifts,—I was declared *pak* (clean) and a new *jenat*[1] (Brahminical cord) was given me. All the money I had saved during five years was thus spent. But who can combat against destiny?

74. The time approached for my marriage. All the ceremonies for this were conducted without my attendance; my mother and the mother of my wife, with the priests arranged all these. The ceremony was performed, and the bride's face was allowed to be seen, by the members of my family, the first night: but the *dhaee's* description of her was false—how could the moon be beautiful if it had small-pox? The property of my wife was nearly all *stridun*[2] (property settled on herself).

75. My six months' leave was soon over, and I determined to rejoin my regiment. Therefore, leaving my wife to the care of my mother, I set off to go to Ajmeer in Rajpootana, where my regiment was supposed to be—at least where it was ordered

[1] *Janeʻu.—Ed.* [2] *Istrī-dhan.—Ed.*

to go when I left. No letter had ever come from my uncle during my stay at home, but I had sent two to him. In those days the dâks were very uncertain, and letters were generally entrusted to people proceeding to the place, wherever it might be, instead of sending them by the Sirkar's dâk.

76. I arrived in a few days at Agra, and went to the Adjutant General Saheb for information; but he could not tell me much, except that he thought my regiment had gone with a force to Nagpoor. I received two months' advance of pay, and took the road through Jeypoor, and met with no adventure until I came there.

77. Jeypoor is one of the cleanest cities I have ever seen, and its streets are very broad—it was altogether a beautiful place: peacocks walked about everywhere, all animals were tame, the deer came close up to one, pigeons of all colours abounded, clear streams of water ran on either side of the streets, the shops were very large, and the gardens all round were beautiful. "There creepers bloomed on numerous trees, different kinds of flowers were in blossom, on which swarms of bees were gathering honey." *Koketas*[1] (the Indian cuckoo) were singing on the mango trees, and peacocks strutted about in the shady places. A Pundit informed me that this town was built by Rajah Jey Singh; that a Francees Saheb furnished the plans; but the people of the place do not like this to be said. I went to the king's garden, and here I saw an animal that astonished me to look at: it had a head like a *Neilgaee*, with a neck four yards long, and hoofs like a horse. Its skin was all over spots like a *cheeta*; but it did not eat flesh—it lived on boughs of trees, which it pulled down with its tongue, which was a yard long. I asked the keeper about the animal, and he told me it came from the great desert in Kafferistan (Africa),

[1] Singing, making an infernal whistle he means, which is enough to drive one mad.—*Tr.*

A Bengali has added a marginal note to my copy that he thinks 'infernal' must be a printer's error for 'internal.' The word is probably *kokilā* one of the many cuckoos.—*Ed.*

four thousand *coss* off, and that it was very gentle. The people called it[1] *gao pulung*, but I do not know its name or its *zat*; all I know is, it was a wonderful animal; never was such a beast described in any *bhasbundee*[2] (grandma's tale). This was an astonishing city, a place of marvels; for I soon saw another wondrous animal, a bird one hundred times as large as a *peeroo* (turkey), and ten times as big as a *sarus* (Indian crane): it could run as swift as the wind, but, although it had wings, was unable to fly. Its keeper told me its food was stones, and that it also came from Kafferistan, where the people use it instead of a horse. Really this was the city of *dithbundee*[3] (enchantments). These marvellous animals were all presents to the Rajah from the Nawab of Surat, Nassir-ul-deen, who had big ships trading to all parts of the world.

78. I remained several days at this place, and then proceeded to Ajmeer. The high hill of[4] *Taraghur*, near it, I could see two days' journey off. I found my regiment had left; I therefore joined some irregular cavalry, and went on towards Nagapoora (Nagpoor).

79. In fifteen days I found my regiment at Amboorah. My uncle was quite well, although he had again been wounded by a bullet, in his right arm. To my great delight, I found my Captain Saheb had returned; but he was much thinner and could not wrestle now. However, he was as brave as ever, and was worshipped by his men. I have never seen more than two Sahebs like Burumpeel Saheb, and they were *usul Belaitee* (real English), not Sahebs from the hilly island.[5] I was quite able to join the ranks again, as my old wound never gave me pain except in damp weather.

80. In a few days we were directed to storm a village by name Ahunpoora, which was held by Arab log, soldiers of Appa

[1] *Gā,ū palang*, lit. cow-leopard.—*Ed.*

[2] *Vide* note to Urdu translation —*Ed.*

[3] *Dithbandī=Indrajāl.—Ed.*

[4] *Tārā-garh.—Ed.*

[5] It is not very evident what Seetaram means by the "hilly island;" all Belait (Europe) is imagined by the Hindoos to be composed of different islands. —*Tr.*

Saheb.[1] These men were said to be the bravest men in the world—even a match for the European soldiers; still our Colonel Saheb did not hesitate to try and to take the place with us Hindoostanees. These Arabs fought desperately for their lives, and my regiment lost many sepoys; eleven in my company alone were killed and wounded. When one house was taken the enemy retired to another. They did not run away, but died at their posts, like men. They were very expert marksmen, and our loss was great upon every occasion of fighting them. Even dislodging them from a few huts was a difficult matter.

CHAPTER VI.

81. For a considerable time, although every means of dislodging the enemy were tried, we made little progress; but at last, the few that remained escaped down a ravine. These, however, were nearly all Mahrattas. Whilst running along a lane in the village, I came upon an enclosure belonging to a house, and entered it, expecting I should find it deserted; but I saw an Arab in the very act of killing a young girl, who was kneeling before him, and imploring him to spare her life. The moment he beheld me, he cried out, in a loud voice, "*Arlum*"[2] (not now), and rushed at me like a tiger. He came with such frantic violence, that he quite transfixed himself on my bayonet before I could recover my surprise. I fired my musket, and blew a great hole in his chest. Still, even after this, he managed to give me a severe cut on my arm in his dying struggles. These men have lives like jackals, and they all fight like *Ghazees*[3] (Mahomedan fanatics, who are in the habit of rushing sword in hand on an army).

82. The girl threw herself at my feet, and embraced my legs. She was in reality, with regard to beauty, what the Dhaie had described my betrothed to be. I asked her who she

[1] *Appā Ṣāḥib.—Ed.* [2] Probably *amhil*, Ar.—*Ed.*

[3] Ghāzī, properly in Urdu, a religious warrior.—*Ed.*

was, and where she came from, and where her friends or relations were? She told me that she was the daughter of a Thakoor in Bundelkund, by name Mokum[1] Singh. She had been carried off by the Pindarees, and then sold to this Arab, whose mistress she was by compulsion. Her father had been killed, and many of her relations, in defending their property. She also assured me that the remaining ones would never receive her back again, as she was disgraced beyond redemption; and she concluded her unhappy story by saying I was her Lord, her only protector now.

83. The village had been set on fire, and the smoke was coming in dense clouds over the place we were in. I hastily bound up my arm with the turban of the dead Arab, and taking his sword, as a proof of my having slain him, I led the little *mirg* (antelope) through the unburnt part of the village, and joined my company again. But I did not know what to do with the girl, for I knew I should not be allowed to keep her with me. After the fight, our force retired some miles, and encamped in rear of Ahunpoora. I told my uncle of my adventure, and his advice was that I should leave the girl, and not encumber myself with a woman in these times of war. But how could I have left her to be burnt to death? I went to my Captain, and told him of the affair. He praised me much, and ordered her to be put in charge of the Bazar Chowdree (head man of the bazar).

84. This young creature rode my tattoo, and remained in the care of the Chowdree; but I saw her every day, and my heart became inflamed with love, for she was beautiful to look on, and always called me her Protector. I am old now, but never before or since, have I seen any woman like her—not even at Delhi.[2]

85. For a week or more, no notice was taken of me or the girl; but at the end of this time I was sent for by the Adju-

[1] *Mokkham Singh.—Ed.*

[2] Delhi, and the Punjab generally, is famous for its beautiful women.—*Ed.*

tant, who told me I must not keep her, as women were not allowed to accompany the force. At this, my mind was filled with sadness, and my heart became a target for the arrows of despair. I pleaded that as she remained with the camp followers, the girl could give no trouble, nor put the Sirkar to any expense. He then proposed to give me one hundred rupees for her, and ended by offering four hundred rupees, if I would give her up. But I could not make up my mind to part with her, although I foresaw now I should soon lose her. My uncle advised me most strongly to get rid of her, as she would only bring disgrace on me. For the first time, my uncle and myself nearly had a quarrel. True was the warning the Pundeet Duleep had given me—"More men are entangled in the wiles of a woman, than fish in the net of the most skilful fisherman. The arrows from their eyes wound more than the poisoned arrows of the Bheel.[1]"

86. If I had been in cantonments, nothing would have been known, and no one would have cared about my keeping this girl; for many of the sepoys constantly had women living with them, and the Sahebs never forbade this, as they were all put down as relations. If Burumpeel Saheb had asked me for her, it might have been different; but this he never did: he applauded me for my kind action, and took me to the Colonel, and told him about my having killed the Arab. I presented the sword to the Colonel, who was graciously pleased to accept it. At the same time he promised me promotion as soon as possible, and ordered me to be made a lance *naique* (acting corporal) at once. But this gave me no advance of pay, only I had the command of four men, and wore a *billah* (stripe); and of course felt myself now of more importance.

87. My regiment marched about from one hill-fort to another; sometimes guns and Europeans were attached to us, at others we fought alone. Once or twice we were repulsed: in one fight two officers were shot dead, and four wounded; among

[1] A race of aboriginal savages in Central India, who used poisoned arrows.—*Tr.*

these was the Adjutant Saheb—he received a very severe cut from a tulwar on his right shoulder. These Arab log had been in the service of Appa Saheb, and so much were they esteemed for their great bravery, that their pay was double that of the Sirkar's sepoys. They were now fighting on their own account as they would not obey Appa's order to give in. I think, that as no Saheb could speak their language, and that as they were always spoken to through a Moulvie, who pretended to know their *bole* (speech), they did not understand the terms the Sirkar gave for their surrender, which were, that they should lay down their arms, and leave the country. But this order, whether they understood it or not, was never obeyed, for they fought to the last, never asking or giving quarter.

88. They destroyed nearly three whole companies of a newly-raised regiment, the 2nd battalion of the 10th, under Major Esparkes (Sparks), having previously refused a *jholee maoke*[1] (white flag). Brigadier Adams Saheb revenged this treachery, and killed the whole party of Arabs and Goonds, who were under their Chief, Chyn Sah. In several other engagements they were also defeated, and then a truce was made. This was soon broken through.

89. The Sirkar had now a large army, with plenty of guns. The fort of Hasser[2] was summoned to surrender; but its governor, Juswunt Row, would not listen to any terms, and determined to hold it to the last. He was a very brave man. An English officer went down to the gateway to persuade the Killadar to give up the place without bloodshed; he pointed out that Maharajah Scindia was a friend of the Sirkar, and master of the Governor of the fort. Still he was not listened to; and so confident was Juswunt in the strength of the place, and the valour of his Arabs, that the officer was insulted, and one shot actually fired at him through defiance.

90. This treatment of one of their officers enraged the *gora log* so much that they were impatient to rush at the place, which was very strong, and the walls of great thickness. It

[1] This term not traceable.—*Ed.*

[2] Hasser not traceable.—*Ed.*

stood on a hill one thousand feet high, and the approaches were all exposed to a galling fire from the garrison. Many of our sepoys were of opinion the place would stand a very long siege; but my uncle told me that the Sirkar had taken it once, and that now they had such a fine army, with so many heavy guns, it would easily be taken again. My *kismut*[1] (fate) had thus far been good; still I could not look on the *boorgees*[2] (bastions) without some fear: my *kuleja*[3] (liver) became like water.

91. The siege soon began with the heavy guns. The enemy made frequent sallies; but our shells (a weapon they had been unaccustomed to) made fearful slaughter among them. Great pieces of wall soon came down, and the constant roar of the guns was like the coming in of the *bursāt* (rains, at which time the thunder continues incessant for many hours).

92. A Colonel Frasun (Fraser) Saheb forced his way into the town, and held possession of some Bunias' shops for two or three days; but he was killed in repulsing a sortie from the enemy.

93. The morning after this happened, the citadel was abandoned by the enemy, and my regiment was ordered to occupy it, and while rushing up to this place the foe suddenly sprang a mine right under us. I was blown up into the air, and became senseless. I knew nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing, for a long time; but when I came to my senses again, I found two European gunners pulling me by the legs out of the mass of earth and bricks, and one of them forced some rum down my throat.[4] They took me to a Saheb, and I was sent to the field hospital to die. My legs were not broken, but my left arm hung down powerless by my side and I had four severe cuts on my head from bricks or wood. I may count these as wounds; so I have been wounded seven times in the service of the Sirkar. How many days I lay in the tent I do not know.

[1] *Qismat.—Ed.* [2] *Burj.—Ed.*

[3] For 'heart' in a metaphorical sense Indians usually say 'liver.'—*Ed.*

[4] This did not break his caste again, as it was a question of life and death.—*Ed.*

94. Day after day the guns continued to roar; but one morning they ceased firing, and the day this happened I partially recovered my speech again. I asked about my uncle, and the fate of my company; and to my horror was told, by a wounded sepoy of my regiment, that every man was killed, except myself and three others—Tiluckdaree Gheer, Kadir Bux and Naique Deonarain; and there were four men away on a guard who escaped. Forty-seven men were killed by this terrible explosion. Well might I have felt fear before the siege! My mind was oppressed with grief. My uncle was never found at all, so deep was the mass of ruins, and there was no time to make much clearance. How I longed to go and look for his body; but I could not move hand or foot.

95. At this time the hospital tents were so full that the Sahebs gave up their tents to the wounded. My Captain was very kind to me, and Captain Burma Saheb was also in the same tent with me, severely wounded. Burumpeel Saheb had escaped most wonderfully, as he was only a few yards in advance of the edge of the mine. He was thrown down, and nearly suffocated with earth, but still not hurt. No. 2 Company was destined to be destroyed; No. I Company had gone over the same mine a few moments before it was sprung. The fort was taken, and I was told all kinds of people were found in it—Arabs, Beloochees, Cabool people and others.

96. The Sirkar again did not punish "Row Sar" [1] but allowed him to go. I asked my Captain why Jaswant was not executed; and he told me that it was because he had only obeyed the orders of his master Maharajah Scindia, who pretended to be a friend of the Company Bahadur, but was in reality its enemy; and that the punishment would fall on him. The justice of the Sirkar is wonderful, and its ways inexplicable: but what is the use of fighting if you do not destroy your enemy? These were new customs to this people; they thought the Sirkar mad for being so merciful, and they tried every way to take advantage, in which they often succeeded:

[1] *Rā,o Ṣāḥib?—Ed.*

but Lord Malcolm Saheb was such a mighty chief, they seldom deceived him; few Lord Sahebs were like him.

97. It proves what I have before said, that the Saheb log and *gora log* like fighting for the sake of fighting; and the latter, if they have but enough of their beloved spirit, are content;—it is an amusement, a kind of *khel* (game) to them.

98. This war being now finished, the army broke up, and the different regiments marched to their stations. My battalion was ordered to *Koel*[1] (Aligarh). I was taken all the way in a *doolee*,[2] and could have got sick leave again to my home, but for certain reasons I did not wish to go just then. I was allowed to live in a hut by myself, and the young Thakoorin lived with me, and attended me. I was more happy then than I had ever been in my own home. In a few months I had recovered sufficiently to be able to walk about.

99. At this period several new battalions were being raised for the Sirkar. The Colonel Saheb of my regiment told me, if I felt inclined to join one of these new battalions, I could get promoted to naique. As my good and kind uncle was dead, and nearly all my comrades in my own company also, I made up my mind to leave my old corps. But what I felt as the most painful thing in my new undertaking was leaving my Captain Saheb—there was only one Burumpeel Saheb ever came from Belait and he was in my old regiment.

100. I joined the headquarters of the new battalion at Futteghur in July 1820, and found it only consisted of two companies, made up from men of different regiments as a foundation of the new one the Sirkar wished to form. There were only two officers, Major Gardeen Saheb, and an Adjutant.

101. The Major was very tall, and dark; his temper was very hard, and he was in the habit of coming on parade in a shooting dress, and throwing his heavy stick at the heads of the recruits, and sometimes even at the drill instructors, if

[1] *Ko,il.—Ed.*

[2] *Ḍūlī* a kind of open *pālkī* for carrying one person only. It is also called *kaṭholī.—Ed.*

they did anything to annoy him. Consequently he was much disliked, though feared. He told the Native officers he had been removed from his own regiment against his wish, and sent to command them, and he hated them all. In fact, through fear of him, for four months only about forty recruits came for service.

102. After this came four more Sahebs from other regiments, and three new Sahebs (cadets); more men also came, and the drill commenced.

103. The Major Saheb was not liked by the English officers; they never spoke to him before or after parade, nor seemed to associate with him in any way. The only person he appeared to be friends with was an old *ābdār* (water cooler). No one knew why this man had such influence over the Saheb; but I know that all sepoys wanting leave, or any other indulgence, always tried to secure the good graces of the *ābdār*, to speak to his master in their favor.

104. One day I was on guard at his house, and in the evening the Major Saheb was going to smoke his hooka,[1] when he got into a violent passion because it would not draw, and threw the lighted *chillum*[2] at the hookaburdar's[3] head. The *gools*[4] (red-hot balls, made of charcoal, etc.) rolled all over the room, and set fire to the floor matting, which communicated the flames to a tent in another room. The servants and the guard all rushed in and succeeded in putting out the fire, but the tent was nearly spoilt. During this time the Saheb never moved from his chair. Then the *ābdār* came and spoke to the Saheb, and his rage was quelled in a moment. But giving way to this had cost him dear; the tent was nearly new, and must have been worth three hundred rupees.[5]

105. We tried to find out the secret of the *ābdār's* influence

[1] *Ḥuqqa.—Ed.* [2] *Chilam* is the earthen bowl of the pipe.—*Ed.*

[3] *Ḥuqqa-bardār* a servant who prepares, etc., the pipe; still kept by old-fashioned Nawabs.—*Ed.*

[4] *Gul*, lit., "flower."—*Ed.*

[5] Every officer was supposed to own and keep up a large tent. This was before the days of Kabul tents.—*Ed.*

over this Saheb, but never succeeded. Some in the regiment said he was a near relation. There was no doubt he was slightly mad; his habits were unlike those of other Sahebs. It was his custom to walk up and down his verandah for hours at a time, with his hands behind his back, muttering something to himself, and kicking the wall with his foot at every turn he made. He spoke our language perfectly; but his chief delight was in teasing the recruits and making them tell him if they were married or not, and also the names of their wives—which it is a great shame for a Hindoo to mention. I could also see that his ways to the other officers of the regiment were very odd; the Adjutant Saheb was never allowed to sit down in his presence, nor did his bearer ever offer a chair to any of the Sahebs who came to see him, unless ordered to do so.

106. An officer came to the corps now, who was quite as old to look at as the Major; and I happened to be on guard again at the Major's house, when this officer came to call. I was curious to see if the Major would offer him a chair. He remained standing some short time and then took one himself, and sat down. Now began a storm of words, and I saw the Captain strike the Major a blow which knocked him down. He then left, speaking very loud.

107. The next morning, while returning from the fields, I saw four officers behind the butts. These were some way from the lines, and near some ravines. As the officers were often in the habit of practising with pistols, I did not at first take much notice of them; but as I came nearer, I saw the Major and Captain both there, and knowing the custom of the officers was to fire with pistols at one another after a quarrel, I stopped to see what was going on. The Major was placed a short distance in front of the Captain by an officer, and another officer attended upon the Captain. They both fired, and the Major fell forward on his face. I now ran up, and found the Major dead; a bullet had gone through his head. I went to the hospital for a doolee. The news spread through the lines in a moment. The Major was taken to his own house, and in the evening

buried. But the only person who seemed affected was the *ābdār*; no grief was on any Saheb's face.

108. What curious customs the Feringhees[1] have! Here, in this case, revenge was not taken at the time, when the anger was hot, nor was the fight with swords.[2] No words were spoken, no abuse given, but the Sahebs were as cool and collected as if on parade. What I did not understand was, the officer attending on the Major was a great friend of the Captain's, and both the attendant officers spoke to one another, and were friends, as they lived in the same house. The English have rules about *izzut* (honour) very strict, and if they are insulted they must fight, or they are never again spoken to by their brother officers. In those days, Sahebs often fought with one another, and after the fight, they frequently became greater friends than ever. Of late years I have not heard of Sahebs fighting with one another; if they do, it is done secretly, and as if now they were ashamed to be seen. But I believe it is, they fear the new rules about their fighting, which are very strict: the Saheb who fights is now tried by a court martial and dismissed the service; no excuse is ever taken. I have heard that the Belaitee Badshah was obliged to put a stop to this habit, as he lost so many good officers through it, and the family of the Saheb who was killed had to be supported by the State. I cannot imagine how they can fight when their anger is cooled; but this, like all they do, is managed by their wonderful *bundobust* (arrangement).

109. The *gora log* do not fight among themselves with swords or pistols; they use their fists, which are dangerous, for I have known several men to have been killed. However, after their fights, they soon become friends again; but even among them they lose caste if they refuse to fight.

110. Another officer was sent to command the regiment, Colonel Hamilteen Saheb. He was very different to the Major, and was much liked by the officers and men. The regiment

[1] *Farangī*, Frank.—*Ed.*

[2] The sword is a more honourable weapon.—*Ed.*

was now a thousand strong, all composed of fine tall young men.

111. For two or three years nothing worth mentioning took place that I can remember, except that the regiment marched to Meerut. I had paid a large sum of money for the Thakoorin (daughter of a Thakoor) to regain her caste, and was married to her by the ceremony called *gurdub*[1] (a second marriage, but not so binding as the first). At Meerut a "joy of the world" was born to me—a son!

112. About this time it was generally reported that the Sirkar was going to give assistance to Maharaja Bulwunt Sing of Bhurtpore, who had been driven from his throne by his brother Doorjan. The Maharaja had begged and prayed the Sirkar to grant him his rights; he was then only a boy, and there was a strong party against him at Bhurtpore.

CHAPTER VII.

113. General Lonyocty was then Governor of Delhi, and he gave orders for an army to be assembled. My regiment received instruction to march to Agra, but it only went four or five marches, and was then recalled to Meerut. Great was the disappointment of the officers, for they longed for their new regiment to see service and have a name.

114. After a month, orders were again given and we marched to Agra, where a large army was encamped. Here we remained some time. Some people thought that Doorjun Sah,[2] hearing an army was coming against him, would give up the fortress without fighting. One day he sent to say he would do this, then another day that he intended to fight. All this was only to gain time, and collect more men and arms. The

[1] *Gandharbh*, one of the eight forms of Hindu marriage mentioned by Manu. It is marriage by mutual consent, the sign being an exchange of garlands, or where garlands are not obtainable, by exchange of love-sentiments. It is not now legal.—*Ed.*

[2] *Durjan Sāhū.—Ed.*

English had besieged Bhurtpore[1] before, in Lad Lick's (Lord Lake) time and lost half an army there; the place had been delivered up, but not captured. This the people all knew, and well remembered. The place was now much stronger than formerly, and was reported to have many large guns, which would throw a ball three *coss* (six miles): in these the Bhurtpore people put great faith, and considered the place as impregnable.

115. The English Lad Saheb, getting tired of these useless negotiations, marched the army from Agra, and laid siege with many large guns The great annoyance now was from the enemy's horsemen, who always hovered about our camp, and cut up numbers of the camp followers and stragglers. Whenever they were chased by the Sirkar's horse, they always galloped under the guns of the fort, or into some gateway, only known to them. The Sirkar's guns were of no use in making a breach, for the walls were so thick that a company might have stood in column upon them, and wheel into line.

116. The enemy made many attacks on our camp at night, and all the neighbouring States were waiting to see the fortune of the Sirkar. If a reverse had taken place, they would have come down on our camp in rear, where there was deep jungle, which was difficult to guard.

117. The Sappers and Miners were set to work to form mines underneath the walls. I was on guard one night at the mouth of one of these mines, and about midnight the sentry reported that the water was coming all over the fields; the enemy had let the water out of the big ditch, and if I had not given notice in time, it would have suffocated the miners, as mice are killed during the rains. The Sappers soon made *pies*[2] (small mud walls), and turned the water from the mouth of the mine. This was on the *burra din* (Christmas day).

118. Some weeks after this the gallery was carried under one of the bastions, and it was reported that the mine would be fired. All our troops turned out to see the effect; and the

[1] *Bharatpūr.—Ed.*

[2] *Pā,ī.—Ed.*

enemy, thinking an attack was intended, manned the walls, and were intent on firing an enormous big gun from the tower under which the mine was laid. For a time there was a deep silence throughout our whole camp; but the mine did not go off, and the Sapper officers were very anxious, thinking that the enemy had countermined, and several of them rushed to see if the match was out, when off went the mine, and the tower, big gun, men and all, were thrown into the ditch round the fort, and a hole left in the wall big enough to have marched a company in at. The enemy ceased firing for a time, being quite thunderstruck with awe. Our artillery kept up a hot fire on the breach all night.

119. Next morning a storming party was formed: my company, and part of another, of my regiment, were included in the column of attack. Doorjun's people fought desperately; but who can withstand the rush of the Europeans? After 10 o'clock that morning, the far-famed fortress of Bhurtpore belonged to the Sirkar. Doorjun himself was captured alive while trying to escape.

120. There was plenty of *loot*, and many Sahebs got very valuable things. I found a handsome necklace on a woman who had been killed. This was my share; and I thought I would put it round my son's neck. But I was seen by two Europeans, who took it away from me by force, and cut it in two, each taking half. However, I afterwards found one of these men quite drunk, and easily regained one portion of the ornament without using any force.

121. Great numbers of the enemy, or rather of the city, had been killed by the shells, and numbers were destroyed by the mine. I went to look at the place, which was wonderful to see. The large gun had fallen down below into the ditch, with men crushed to death under it, like Juggurnauth. But all these men had died at their gun; what better death could they have wished? This gun was called "*Futteh-jung sir-phorunhar*" (the victorious in war; the headsmasher"); it was three muskets' length, and the ball was the size of a *ghurra* (earthen

pot, which however varies in size very much). There was written on it, that 75 seers[1] of powder was its proper charge. I have heard the Sahebs talk of the new large guns they have in England, but I hardly think they are bigger than four or five guns I saw at this place, Bhurtpore.

122. In spite of all that was said about this fort, it did not cost much life to take, as not more than fifty sepoys were killed, and in the storming-party, which my regiment furnished, only five men were killed and fifteen wounded. The Europeans lost very nearly the same number; but many Sahebs were wounded because they would go near the walls, to fire with their small guns and rifles. This was strictly prohibited, but the order was not obeyed.

123. After this siege, my regiment was sent to garrison several small forts in the province; my company was ordered to Biana Ghuree.[2] These places were soon dismantled, by having the walls blown up, and corps returned to Meerut after having been away about a year.

124. There now came a new Lad Saheb to India, who was much disliked by all the officers. He wished to reduce their pay; and the Sahebs nearly mutinied. They had many meetings at their own houses, and were very disturbed in mind; many of them declared they would serve the Sirkar no longer. This Lad Saheb was sent by the Company Bahadoor to save money, as, from the great expense of the wars, they said they were very poor: but who can believe this was the reason?—what want of money had ever the Sirkar Company? I heard that the officers of one regiment asked the officers of another whether their men would stand by them if they marched to Calcutta to force the Lad Saheb to give them their *huck*[3] (rights). I also was told that the European soldiers said they would not act against the officers of the Native army, as long as their object was the *batta* alone. At this time every Saheb was enraged, and spoke much against the Sirkar; but more blame

[1] =150 lbs.—*Tr.* [2] *Biyāna Garhī.—Ed.* [3] *Haqq.—Ed.*

was given to the new Lad Saheb, who, they said, was doing this injustice without orders, and only because he wished to make *khooshamut* (favour) with the Company.

125. The Sirkar made the young Maharajah Bulwunt pay all the expense of the war, now they had restored his throne to him, and it amounted to more than one crore [1] of rupees (£1,000,000). This was considered a great insult by many Princes and Nawabs, who looked upon the Sirkar hitherto as their friend, not their paid ally. Some of them now boasted that they could hire the services of the English whenever they required them. I have heard that one Rajah sent an agent to the Sirkar, to know what sum of money would induce them to *phudphudana* [2] (to lick or wallop) another Rajah who had insulted him; but this was the talk of the bazars and may not be true.

126. All kinds of news, true and false, are discussed in the bazars of large stations: anything injurious to the *ikbal* of the Sirkar is listened to with the greatest avidity, which induces idle people, who have nothing better to do, to invent news; and the greater the lie the more it is believed—that is, if it is in any way detrimental to the Sirkar's interest. I remember, during the Russian war, which was the only time there was no war in India, how news was always fabricated to show that the Sirkar was generally worsted, that the Russ had destroyed all the English army, and sunk all the warships. This idea was fostered by interested parties, so that when the Mutiny broke out, it was the belief of most Natives that the Sirkar had no more troops but what were then in India. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the rebels when they saw regiment after regiment pouring into the country; they then lost heart, saw they had been deceived, and soon found out it was useless to withstand the mighty power of the *Ungrese raj* (English rule).

127. After remaining two years at Meerut, my regiment was sent to Shahjehanpore, and from thence to Kurnaul, and after-

[1] A *karor* is ten millions or a hundred lakhs.

[2] Perhaps this meaning of the verb was slang, an unusual word.—*Ed.*

wards to Loodiana. Nothing occurred of any note during these years, except that some alterations were made in the dress of the sepoys, and in many corps rifle companies were formed. Small wars took place every year in some part of Hindoostan, but my regiment did not take any share in them.

128. I had been promoted to Havildar, and also held the appointment of Pay Havildar (pay serjeant), which in those days was a much coveted situation. Most of the sepoys of the company kept their money in my hands, and as this was seldom required by them except when they went on furlough, I used to lend out some of it at good interest. At the end of every month the money was shown to any sepoy who chose to satisfy himself it was safe; and this went on from month to month, until I had accumulated the sum of Rs. 500.

129. Pay Havildars used to lend the Sahebs money; and as all the officers' pay went through their hands, there was little fear of losing it, unless when a Saheb died, in which case we dare not bring it forward as a claim. The practice was forbidden, but I seldom heard of anyone being punished for doing it.

130. The officers' pay, although large, seldom sufficed for their wants, and there were only two officers in my regiment who were not in debt; many owed large sums. They spent a great part of their pay in giving feasts; some gambled; others lost large sums on the race-course—a sport they are passionately fond of. All the Sahebs who were married were always in debt—their expenses are great but some of them were poor through misfortune.

131. The Captain of my company had all his property destroyed by his boat sinking in a river. He had no money to buy anything with, and I lent Rs. 500; but, unfortunately, the time of furlough was at hand, and the sepoys required their money. Having lent some of theirs with my own, I was unable to make good the whole amount I ought to have had in my hands. I was reported to my Colonel Saheb; and although I sold everything I had, and my Captain tried all he could to raise the money, still I was Rs. 137 short. I was tried by a

court-martial, found guilty of disobedience of orders, and sentenced to be deprived of my Pay Havildarship;—if it had not been for my former good conduct, I should have been reduced to a sepoy again. This was the first court I had ever appeared before.

132. How perfectly incomprehensible the laws of the Sirkar are to us Hindus! I was found guilty by a number of Native officers of my own regiment, not one of whom really thought what I had done to be in any way wrong, and every one of them would have acted in the same manner had they been in my situation; yet, because they imagined it was the Colonel's desire I should be punished, they found me guilty. The European officers also knew quite well; but it was the custom of the service.

133. The Articles of War are often read to regiments; the language, however, is seldom understood, being nearly all Persian and Arabic. Some of it is of course plain, but the greater part, like the orders of the Governor-General, &c., is far above the comprehension of any but those who have had a good education. Generally, not more than two or three sepoys in a company could tell, after hearing these orders read, what he must do, or what he ought not to do. In the first place, the Interpreter Saheb nearly always reads too quick; and secondly, frequently mispronounces the words.

134. My Lord, a sepoy does not require a lot of rules and regulations to be read to him, which only fill his head with doubts and fears; he ought to look up to his Commander as his father and mother, his protecting power, his God, and as such be taught to obey him. We do not understand divided power; absolute power is what we worship. Among the English, power is much divided. The Commanding Officer has certainly some power; the Adjutant also (sometimes more than the Commander). The Commander-in-Chief has a great deal, the Governor-General still more; but they each have to ask some higher authority still, before they can do anything. The Commanding Officer has to ask half a dozen other

officers[1] before he can punish a sepoy, and the punishment takes months before it can arrive, and when the punishment is inflicted, one-half the men have forgotten all about the case, and the effect is quite lost. I remember in a certain regiment, that a Havildar was tried by a court-martial and dismissed the service for insolence to a superior officer, for which he should have been flogged. When his sentence was read out to him on parade, he turned round, and told his Commanding Officer he should go direct to the Commander-in-Chief Saheb and appeal. Another Havildar was promoted in his room. He went up to Simla, and threw himself in front of the Lad Saheb's lady, and cried out for justice and mercy. In three months' time he was restored to the service, and sent back to his own regiment again!—thus laughing at the beard of the General, the Brigadier, and his Commanding Officer. No sepoy then cared for a court-martial. But this was in the days when any complaint was listened to by the Commander-in-Chief. The Colonel Saheb was disgusted; he had no power, what could he do?

135. The Commander ought to have power of life and death: when the sword is 300 *coss*[2] off, who fears? When sepoys find their Commander is not their Commander in reality, they will always look up to some higher power. This was one reason of the Mutiny. The sepoys no longer feared their officers, and they saw quite well that their authority was very limited. It is curious how this power was gradually taken away: first the Sahebs used to teach the sepoy his drill with a stick—then that was forbidden; a Commanding Officer could flog his men when it was necessary—then that was done away with.[3]

136. I have said the people of India worship power; they also love splendour, and display of wealth. Great impression is made upon the mass by this; much greater than the English seem to think. Our idea of the power and might of our

[1] A Court-martial?—*Ed.* [2] *Kos.*—*Ed.*

[3] Seetaram evidently has not seen the New Articles of War: they would delight the old man's heart!—*Tr.*

kings and princes was always associated with magnificent equipments, shining with gold and silver. Have we not thought so since we were children? Is it not the burden of every tale that is told? What then can we think of a Governor-General, or Lieutenant-Governor, when we see a Saheb with a black dress in a buggy, without any ornaments or retinue? The Government officials know he has power, but the common people consider him all *joothmooth* [1] (sham) and he does not come up to their idea of a Rajah, a Nawab, or even of a Wuzeer. They then draw comparisons, which the Sirkar would not wish to hear.

137. I have often asked the Sahebs why they do not take a lesson from some of their *memsahebs*, and wear more ornaments; for I have seen some English ladies, when they go to their *nautches*, appear really as princesses ought to do. They have told me that it was considered a shame for a Saheb to wear jewels or ornaments, except those of honour: but these latter that I have seen are very paltry. One Saheb told me his Memsaheb spent so much money on her jewels, it was impossible for him to wear any, even if he felt inclined to do so!

138. Peculiarities of character and superior intelligence, we sometimes bow down to also, but not so much as to outward pomp and show. General Nicolsain Saheb was considered by some as an *avatar* (incarnation of the deity) and there are those who still mourn his removal from the world. General Jacum (Jacob) was looked upon as next to Mahomed [2] by many of the hill tribes; but I am told he is dead also.

139. The Sirkar should remember, that the value of a regiment of sepoys greatly depends on their Commanding Officer. If the men like him; if he understands them, can enter into their feelings, and has obtained their confidence which is not to be done in one day, or one year; and above all, if he has power, and possesses justice—they will do any-

[1] *Jhūṭh mūṭh*, should be used only adverbially.—*Ed.*

[2] Hindus (not Muslims) say Muḥamed Ṣāḥib.—*Ed.*

thing, go anywhere, and his will is law. But when a perfect stranger to them and their feelings is sent to command, there is always discontent. Among us, there is a great dislike to new ways; one Saheb upsets what the other has done, and we do not know what to do, because what we have been taught one day is wrong the next! I have known four Commanding Officers come to a regiment in one year, three Adjutants, and two Quarter-masters! And this was not from the officers having been killed in war. It takes us a long time to learn the ways of a Saheb, and when the men are accustomed to him, it is not good to have him removed. Before the Mutiny, any clever officer was always taken from his regiment for some appointment, and he never came back again, perhaps, for years; and when he did so he knew very little about the men.

140. The black man is not the only one who likes and dislikes the Commanding Officer; for I remember a regiment of Europeans once would not go into a Sikh battery, because they disliked their Colonel—and they stood to be made dust of by cannon shot, sooner than move. I heard this officer was wounded—some say by his own men,—and was succeeded by another officer they did like, and the men then instantly took the battery and drove the *Khalsajee*[1] like dust before the wind!

CHAPTER VIII.

141. And now, my Lord, I will say something about the Sirkar's new army; I mean the one that has been raised since the Mutiny. As far as I know, the men all dislike the service now—Hindoos, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Pathans, Doogras. They get no leisure; they never know their work; they have to learn one kind of drill one year, and another the next, and they get punished for not remembering the new. They now have examinations, and promotion goes by supposed merit; which means the Commanding Officer's pleasure—a very

[1] Sikhs.—*Tr.*

precarious thing to depend upon for promotion.[1] The Punjabees and Sikhs only took the Sirkar's service because they thought they should have a chance of getting plunder, not because they were pleased at entering the service, or looked to it for bread and pension; they have no reverence for the Sirkar, as we had for the Company Bahadoor. If Delhi had not fallen at the time it did, the Sirkar would not have persuaded so many Pathans and other northern men to enter its service. It is well known that these men hung back, waiting to see which side would be victorious: their great hope was, that the Punjab would be in commotion, and they would have gone against the Sirkar with the same alacrity that they then entered its service; it was solely from their love of loot. More than half the men of these regiments now want their discharge, and the other half only remain because they think there may be a chance of plunder for them in China or elsewhere; but by the wonderful *ickbal* of the Sirkar, all prospect of any war is extinguished, like hot ashes by a *mussuck*,[2] and as peace is likely to reign for many years to come, most of these men will gradually wish to go, and if prevented, will be but unwilling servants.

142. Numbers of young men can always be found to enlist, but after the novelty has worn off, they will soon wish to leave a service which is every day becoming more and more distasteful to them; and their officers will have had all the trouble of drilling them for nothing. In the Punjab, the Sikhs will take service, because they are near their homes; but no other country do they like. There is also an uneasy feeling about their pay: the sowar cavalry soldier has had his pay greatly increased, but the foot soldier's remains the same; and now, since everything has become so much dearer throughout Hindoostan, because the Sirkar allows the Bunnias to do as they please, the pay, seven rupees a month, will not support either Punjabee, Sikh, or Mussulman. As for these latter, they

[1] Seetaram seems here to have forgotten what he said about the Commanding Officer's will being law.—*Tr.*

[2] Water skin. *Tr.*

always think they will reconquer Hindoostan from the Feringhees,[1] and look forward to the day, flattering themselves it is not far off. They have not seen what I have or they would not entertain such foolish ideas; but they love to boast of what they have done, and what they will one day do again. They might have some idea of the absurdity of these notions when they remember that they could not hold Delhi with the Sirkar's army even in their service, and its guns in their possession, against four or five regiments of Europeans and a few hastily raised regiments of dirty Punjabees. After the Mutiny, I was posted to a Punjabee corps, and I know what I have said to have been the general feeling.

143. I also know, that if the people of the Punjab should rebel and fight the Sirkar, 100,000 Hindoostanees would be only too glad to take service against them, if it were merely to pay off old scores.

144. The practice of the Sirkar, of keeping several regiments of Native troops together at the same station, is not wise. It is then that the young men get *musth*,[2] and swagger about in the bazars, puffed up with vain conceits, and talk of things they had better not. They forget the giver of their salt.

145. There are always plenty of rascals in every city and in most Sudder bazars, to encourage the men in every villainy. This idle habit has increased much since the Mutiny. Before that time I never heard much about it, but now that calamity has befallen Hindoostan, it is their constant practice. These bazar *nimukharams* (scoundrels) have nothing to lose and they think that in times of confusion and disorder they may gain advantage, as many of them did during the rebellion. Meerut, Cawnpore, and some other cities are full of these men, who escaped punishment for their evil deeds, and make a boast of it. Some bad men will be found in every regiment, and their influence should be well guarded against—especially among young soldiers.

[1] *Farangī*, Frank.—*Ed.* [enough.—*Tr.*

[2] Intoxicated with conceit: this is not the exact meaning but near

146. For several years nothing took place in my regiment. My son became a fine young man, and was enlisted in the corps.

147. In the year 1837, it began to be talked about, all over India, that the Sirkar was going to render assistance to Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk,[1] the Ameer of Cabool, to regain his throne. Every day the rumours increased, and there was great excitement throughout all Hindoostan. Some said the Sirkar would meet the Russ in Afghanistan,[2] who had promised to help the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, the favourite ruler among the Afghans, and that the whole country, with a large army of both Russians and Persians, would be against the English. Great fears were felt by the sepoys at the idea of having to go across the Indus. Many people said the Sirkar's army would be beaten. Others, again, said that the English would take Cabool, as there was a strong party in favor of the deposed king. The sepoys dreaded passing the Indus, because it was out of Hindustan. This is forbidden in our religion: the very act is loss of caste. In consequence of this many sepoys obtained their discharge, and many deserted. The Mahomedans said a large army was coming to invade India, and tried every means they could think of to excite the feelings of the people. They gave out that this invading army was supported by a large force of Russians, and that when it made its appearance in the plains on this side the passes, it would be the signal for the whole Mahomedan population to rise against the Sirkar, and drive the Feringhees out of India. These reports daily gathered strength, till fear filled the mind of the whole Native army. The Russians were said to have an army of hundreds of lakhs, and wealth untold; their soldiers were represented to be of enormous stature,[3] and as brave as lions. The destruction of the Sirkar's rule was pre-

[1] Shāh Shujā'ul-Mulk.—*Ed.*

[2] The Natives of India, although they talk of an Afghan, seldom call the country Afghanistan: with them it is Cabool. Candahar, Jellalabad, Ghuznie, are all Cabool.—*Tr.*

[3] The Natives have the same ideas now, and the followers of a certain Ameer who has lately come among us, have exaggerated the Russ in every way.—*Tr.*

dicted, for how could they oppose their enemies with only twelve or thirteen regiments of Europeans, which were all that were then in India?

148. There were some persons, however, who still maintained that the Company's *ickbal* would overcome everything, but even these became appalled when they heard of the mighty armies that were coming to invade India. In spite of all this troops began to move upcountry, and a force assembled at Ferozepore, where my corps was stationed in October 1838; one lakh of soldiers were collected, and also an army which belonged to Shah Soojah, said to be in his pay, but officered by English officers, and composed of men of India of all kinds who felt disposed to try the fortune of war.

149. I was offered a Havildarship in this legion, with higher pay, and I joined one of these regiments, having lost my chance of promotion in my own, from being tried by a court-martial. It was said, at the time, that this army was paid by the Company Bahadoor. All I know is, that when the Shah regained his throne he could not pay his own guards. This army consisted of artillery, cavalry, and infantry, and was called Shah Soojah's "*leven*" (levy). The *usul* (real) Company's army had then only one weak regiment of Europeans in the force which went with us to Cabool[1]; the sepoy regiments were the Burdwan, Castor, and Grand, and two others.

150. The nearest road to Cabool would have been through the Punjab, which at this time was ruled by Maharaja Runjeet Singh, who was a great ally of the Sirkar, and I believe he offered to let the army march through his territories; but he told Lad Fane Saheb the force was too small, and that a collision might take place with some of his own troops, whom he could hardly manage, up in the north of the Punjab, and therefore the order was given that the force should march down to Sind, and enter the country of the Afghans by the Ghaut[2] Bolan.

151. We marched by the side of large rivers, with thick low

[1] He must mean Candahar.—*Tr.* [2] *Ghāṭ*, H., "a pass."

jungle; it was a very vile country, and the people were wild. After a march of two months, during which half the army was attacked with low fever, we arrived at Roree, on the Indus river. A bridge of boats was constructed, with great toil and trouble, and the army crossed over to the dreaded side of the Indus, which was now for the first time trod by the Hindoostanee sepoy. The country was much the same on the other side as on this, and the people the same also—a nasty and a dirty set. I was crossing with my company, when the bridge broke and three boats were carried away and swept down past Fort Bukkur with frightful force. The boatmen were not able to stop the boats until they had gone six miles. Four sepoys were drowned, and the company had to remain out all night in the deep wet jungle; no one knew the way, but in the morning we discovered the headquarters.

152. The Lad Saheb suffered so much from fever, he went away to Europe. The Bombay army joined the Bengal army, and we marched on towards Shikarpoor. The people of the country were all Mussalmans, whose language we did not understand, and everything belonging to them was unclean. They offered no opposition to our force, and no robberies or murders occurred then; it was after leaving Shikarpoor that our real troubles began. The whole country was a vast sandy desert; the water in the few wells bitter; and everything even wood and water, had to be carried on camels.

153. The Beloochees now began to harass us by night attacks, and took off long strings of our camels. Their method of carrying off camels was very curious. A Belooch horseman would watch a line of them going out to feed, or detached with baggage; he then thrust a spear with a rag covered with camel's blood in the face of a male camel and excited the animal with it, till it rushed after the robber, followed by the whole string; and the Beloochee would thus lead off twenty camels at a time, for many miles into the hills. This loss of the baggage camels so often occurring, was a source of great misery to the army; for although many others were procured, yet, from being un-

broken, they almost always threw their loads and ran off into the desert.

154. Our march was in the middle of the cold weather, yet the heat was so great that numbers of Europeans and sepoys died from its effects, one day thirty-five men fell victims to it. At this period the sepoy army had almost determined to return to India and mutiny was showing itself in all three armies; but partly on account of the lavish promises of the Shah, partly from dread of the Beloochees, who now increased in numbers every day, the armies marched on, and the Sahebs did all they could to encourage their men. Our sufferings were dreadful, and the livers of all the Hindoostanees were turned to water.

155. We went through one valley, called Dadur, which was the mouth of hell; it was low down and surrounded by hills, no air ever came there;—it was worse than my tomb in Bundelkund. Then we came to the Ghaut Bolan. Here many men and camp followers were killed by the Bolanee Kakur *log*, who murdered everyone when they had a chance; large stones were rolled down by them from the mountain sides; the water-courses were all cut through, and the wells filled with peloo[1] wood, which made the water stink, so as to make one sick upon approaching it even. Quetta was next reached. Here it was very cold, and the sudden change occasioned numbers of us to fall sick with fever. In time, Candahar came in sight. All the opposition we met with was from the Beloochees, and hill-tribes near the passes; none was offered by the inhabitants of Candahar. It was said that the Afghans did not know that the Sirkar's army would enter their country by this circuitous route, but expected it would come through the Khyber Pass, near Peshawur, or through some of the other passes by the north; consequently, they had defended those places, and their forces were all collected there. I dare say the Burra Saheb knew this, and sent secret information, by his agents, that the

[1] The *Salva dora persica* which grows all over the Desert and Bar. The smoke from this wood is so offensive as to create nausea, and spoils any food that is cooked with it.—*Tr.*

English army intended to come by the Khyber; but still I know that all the Sahebs with our army were much astonished that there was no enemy, and that no resistance was offered on the Cabool side of the passes.

156. The hill-men do not like coming far into the plains, and seldom leave their homes more than a few *coss* to make a raid on a village, or to attack a *Kafila*.[1] They are very formidable behind their rocks, from whence they can fire with their long *jezails*,[2] which throw a ball three times the size of a musket-ball, and with execution, at four hundred yards; but they never stood a volley of our musketry at close quarters. Their system of warfare is, that each one fights independently, not in compact bodies, like the Sirkar's troops. Everyone passing through these hills is robbed and attacked, no matter if he be a friend or foe; often they are bribed to let *Kafilas* through, which are in the habit of going to India with dried fruits, skins, &c., of their country, and returning with the merchandise of Hindoostan. Large sums are often paid to exempt these from annoyance, but some tribe or other always declare they never received any of the money, and therefore they loot them just the same. These hill-tribes are supposed to belong to the ruler of Cabool, and the Shah sent frequently to inform them that the English were his friends: but no difference was made by them; they fired at and attacked the Shah's men just as much as the Sirkar's. Truly they were a lawless set of blood-thirsty savages.

157. In a short time our army arrived at Candahar—called by many names, such as Lohraspore, Huseinabad, and Naderabad. It was warm weather when we reached this place but not so hot as in Hindoostan. The Sirdars came out at first with a small force; but suddenly, fear seemed to fill their hearts, when they saw the red coats of the Sirkar, and they all ran away. If they had defended the Ghaut Bolan, which took up seven or eight days to get through, half the Sirkar's army might have been destroyed.

[1] *Qāfila.—Ed.*

[2] The long Afghan flint-lock.—*Ed.*

158. During this march of unheard-of hardships, I saw, for the first time during my service, dissensions arise among the officers. The Bombay Lad Saheb and the Bengal General quarrelled. The former thought his army the best. All the Bombay officers looked with contempt on the Shah's army, and great abuse was given us by the regular sepoys, who called us *nujeebs*[1] (irregulars). Lad Kane Saheb was of higher rank than our General, and he gave orders for some of the force to be left behind in Sind. The *bundobust* (good management) for which the Sirkar is so celebrated, had left the heads of both the Commanders.

159. As we approached Candahar, the truth began to come out, that in spite of all the assurances which the Shah had given to us in Hindoostan, that the Afghans were longing for his return, in reality they did not like him for their ruler. Now again fear and remorse attacked the hearts of the sepoys—they imagined they had been deceived by the Shah's promises, and even thought that the Sirkar itself had been misled; but by the wonderful example of the English officers, the army marched on without anything further than lamentations and grumblings, and our hearts were cheered by the thought that if our lives were saved, we should in the end be rewarded by the Sirkar-even if the Shah was unable to fulfill his promises. When we saw the fertile country around Candahar, where gardens with flowers and many kinds of fruits abounded, we began to feel more comfortable again. I cooked my food under the shade of fine trees, with pure water running by. Since leaving Shikarpoor, none of us had ever had a good meal; parched grain, and *suttoo*[2] (parched barley, ground) or a small quantity of musty *attah*,[3] was all we had had to eat.

[1] *Najīb*, lit. "noble." The *najīb* of the Mughal army were excellent irregular infantry, good marksmen and good swordsmen. The Nawāb of Oudh had some najībs organized in imitation of the Company's Infantry. These were worthless in every respect and perhaps brought the term *najīb* into disrepute.—*Ed.*

[2] *Sattū* is any finely ground parched grain except rice.—*Ed.*

[3] *Āṭā*, coarse native flour.—*Ed.*

160. The country we came through was on the confines of hell! It was a land of stones, with no green thing but the *jowassar* (camel-thorn), not a bird but the vulture, which feasted on the dead bodies of our carriage cattle, and the dead comrades we were unable to bury.

161. There were no animals in that vile country till our army came, for what had they to live on? Troops of jackals followed in our track right through the desert, and got sleek and fat by their attendance. When a Hindu died, there was no wood to perform *dar*[1] with, and he was far from holy Kasee[2] or pure Gunga;[3] his lot was sad, for he was conveyed about in divers places in the bellies of hungry jackals! Now I understood why it was forbidden to cross the Indus: truly the fate of those who ever do so is bad; and our misfortunes were increased by the thought of having done that which was forbidden by our religion.

162. The armies entered Candahar, Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk was restored to his throne, and great rejoicings were made by his own people. The Shah's army went first, before the Sirkar's; there was a great *tamasha*;[4] and the people at first seemed pleased at his return; but it was said, that in their hearts they despised him, and that it was only the fear of the Sirkar's army which made them so civil. I think that the common people did not much care who was their ruler, but the Sirdars and head people were offended that the Shah had returned with a Feringhee army; they said he had shown the English the way into their country, and that shortly they would take possession of it, use it as they had done all Hindoostan, and introduce their detested rules and laws;—this was what enraged them. They said, had the Shah come with his own army only, it would have been well. I know that after the king had been a short time at Candahar, the people did not care the least about him, and their breasts were filled with ire

[1] Funeral rite.—*Tr.* *Dāh*, H., burning.—*Ed.*
[2] Benares.—*Tr.* [3] The Ganges.—*Tr.* [4] To do.—*Tr.*

when they saw the English army did not return to Hindoostan, but made the place a regular Cantonment.

163. We found in Candahar many Hindoos and Bunnias, who had forgotten even when their ancestors had come there. We were all surprised at this; but a Bunnia will go wherever he can cheat. They were found afterwards at Ghuznie and Cabool, and I have heard some of them had even penetrated into the country of the Russ.

164. We remained some time in Candahar, doing nothing; but the season for corn was coming on, and we had to wait till it was ripe before we could proceed. So miserable a country was this Candahar that sufficient corn could not be found; either the shop-keepers buried all their stores, or they really had not the quantity required, and it took a long time to collect enough for our onward march.

CHAPTER IX.

165. Candahar was, after all, a very poor city, and not to be compared with many smaller places in Hindoostan. The people dare not build any very large houses, because of the earthquakes which are here stronger and more frequent than at Peshawur. The only large building is Ahmed Shah's Kubur.[1] The Saheb Log expected fighting, and were much disappointed.

166. The sepoys saw no sign of the Shah making them the presents he had promised; in fact, he only reigned around Candahar, and was not King of Afghanistan at all.

167. Why the Sirkar's and Shah's armies halted so long, I never knew; but, by doing so, Dost Mahomed had time to prepare things better for a defence, and get the tribes to send their men to him. The presence of the Feringhees excited the feelings of the people, who looked on them as unwelcome intruders: although they were told the English had not come to

[1] Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī commonly called Shāh Durrānī.—*Ed.*

conquer, or take the country away from them, they remembered the history of Hindoostan, and could not believe that it was only to put Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk Suddozi-ki[1] on his rightful throne.

168. After some months' stay, the army moved on towards Ghuznie, which refused to acknowledge the rule of the Shah. This place was 140 *coss* from Candahar; the road in places was very bad, yet quite easy to what we had come through. Ghuznie everybody said was a place of great strength, and the Afghans felt quite sure it could not be taken.

169. To the astonishment of everyone, Lad Kane Saheb only took light guns with him, and left all the heavy ordnance, which we had such labour and difficulty in dragging through the passes, behind at Candahar, where a garrison of two or three thousand men of the force was also left. When Killa Ghuznie came in view, it was then seen to be a place of great strength, and that it was not likely to be taken without heavy guns.

170. As the army approached, the enemy came out in great force from the town, and sharp firing took place; but they were soon driven in again. This was the first time any fighting occurred since we came into the country. The Governor was Hyder Ally Khan. All the people of the place were in favor of the Dost, and against the Shah; and they felt secure in the strength of the place. The walls were too high to scale, and the horse artillery guns were of little or no use against them.

171. The armies of the Sirkar and Shah were about to leave the place untaken, when one night, a deserter came over to our camp, who said he wished to be taken direct to our General, and it was believed that he pointed out a gate which could be entered. This man was one of the many sons of the Ameer, with whom he had quarrelled, and now he sought to wreak his vengeance on his father by betraying the secret of the door.

172. In a few days a storming party was told off, and orders were given to keep up a hot fire on that side the fort away from

[1] *Saddozai.—Ed*

the door, to take off the attention of the Ghazees,[1] while a body of men went up to this door, with several bags of powder, to blow it open. This night the wind blew hard, and clouds of dust were flying about, which made everything darker than usual. When the guns commenced firing, the Ghazees were seen running with torches, which suddenly made the place look like the *Dwep poojah*[2] (a Hindoo festival, when they light up towns and bazars with oil lamps).

173. After waiting some time, a high flash was seen, although no noise was heard over the firing of the guns. The bugles sounded the advance, and the storming party rushed along—the 13th Goras,[3] and the 16th Grenadiers,[4] with two companies of my regiment. None knew if the gate had been blown in or not, and the Shah's soldiers hung back a little, till, hearing the continued firing of musketry, with bugles sounding, and morning also beginning to break, they went on. The Ghazees fought like demons, but it was no use—the musketry swept them all away.

174. There was great confusion at this time—some said the gate had not been broken, others that the stormers had gone through. Our Brigadier halted the columns in reserve, and sent on an officer. But it was now getting light, and we could see the red coats inside the place. The Ghazees crowded to the gateway, and defended it sword in hand. Some companies of Europeans were driven back, and two companies of sepoys rushed in, and carried the gateway. The Europeans were so pleased at this, that they shook hands with every man of that regiment. I heard that the Brigadier Saheb himself was severely wounded by a Ghazee who attacked him. The place was taken, and soon swam with blood. The head people who were not soldiers, and the women, all came out and begged

[1] *Ghāzī*, lit., a warrior, is in Urdu used for a 'religious warrior.' The modern meaning of *ghāzī* "fanatic" is incorrect.—*Ed.*

[2] The *Diwālī* festival in October or November.—*Ed.*

[3] 13th Regiment Foot, P.A.L.I.—*Tr.*

[4] 16th N. I.—*Tr.*

the protection of the English General Saheb, and they were protected from all insult or harm.

175. The Governor could nowhere be found, nor was it ascertained if he had been killed or not. After looking for him all over the place, an officer found him hidden in a house, and was just going to fire at him, when he called out he was Hyder Ally. He was taken to the General, who treated him very kindly. This man spoke very boldly to the Lad Saheb. He said he was fighting for his country and his Ameer, and that the Afghans had never annoyed the Feringhees; why, therefore, had they come into his country to set up a King whom they all hated? They had brought death and desolation into their families; and he ended by saying, "Kill me if you like; but if you let me go, I shall ever be found as your enemy, and will do all in my power to excite the people against you, and drive you all out of Cabool." The Saheb was not angry; he told him he was a brave man, and that he respected his feelings; but that he, the General, was acting under the orders of his Government, whose servant only he was. Again I saw here the curious customs in war with the English: had this man said half as much before a Nawab or Rajah, he would have been cut to pieces on the spot; still here, in open durbar, the very Sahebs who had fought against him cried out "*Barekilla!*" "*Barekilla!*"[1] (Bravo! bravo!) This was wonderful! Why do they fight? Not to kill their enemies, but to have the pleasuring of capturing them, and then letting them go! It is true, their ways are unaccountable! It was also very odd that this brave man in words, was found hiding after the fight!

176. Ghuznie was a large town, surrounded by a high wall, with a lofty citadel. The Afghans thought the place secure against any invaders; and certainly against any of their tribes it would have been—but what can stand against the *ickbal* of the Sirkar? The son of the Ameer, Ukbar Khan, was reported

[1] *Bārak Allah*, lit., "may God bless you!" This is said by guests to host on the conclusion of the dinner and by people to one raising a subscription for a good object. It also means bravo, etc.—*Ed.*

to be in full march on Ghuznie, to attack the English army; but when the news reached him that the place had fallen, he hastily retreated. In the capture of this place, more Sahebs were killed and wounded than I remember at any other siege; but the loss in men was small—not over 180. The cavalry of our levy here distinguished itself much, and did good service; the Shah's army got a name. This siege took place in the middle of the hot season of 1839. Some Sahebs' ladies came up to this country with the other army,[1] but how they got up here I do not know. They are wonderful for courage. The General Saheb had his lady, who was a real *jungee memsaheb*.[2] I never knew how these ladies came, because the sepoys told me, whichever route they had taken, there was much fighting going on; but after having seen a lady lead a column through a pass I can wonder at nothing. The Pundeet Dhuleepram had often told me—"My son, put not your trust in the counsels of a woman; for they are like ice—they are firm in the early morning, but melt away as the sun rises." However, he had never seen an English memsaheb. If the officers had taken counsel from some of their wives, such calamities would not have befallen the English army as afterwards occurred.

177. A garrison was left at Ghuznie, and our army went on towards Cabool. On our march, the news reached us that Maharajah Runjeet Singh was dead, and there was great anxiety among the officers to know what would result from the event. It was said that the Sikhs would make friends with the Afghans, and help them against the Sirkar, and that they would cut off the English forces going through their country. Other reports were, that the Sikhs would be bribed by the Sirkar. The Afghans were quite as anxious as the English officers could be, as they remembered that the resources of the Sirkar were endless, and that it had more money in one of its

[1] Seetaram makes no mention of how the 41st Foot and 16th Grenadiers came to be at the siege of Ghuznie: a large force had entere Afghanistan by the northern passes, through the Khyber, &c.—*Tr.*

[2] Soldier's wife.—*Tr.*

towns, than they had in their whole country. All kinds of reports were flying about:— first, that the English had been driven out of Candahar, and their army destroyed at the Bolan; then again, that the English were coming through the Bolan with ten lakhs of soldiers. The reports were endless, and at perfect variance. The Sahebs did not know the real state of affairs, and therefore could not contradict any reports circulated in the bazars.

178. Kossids[1] now arrived in our camp, and the General Saheb told us two large armies were soon coming into Afghanistan. This gave courage to our small force, and the Commanders were anxious to proceed before the other armies arrived, who might take all the prizes out of our hands. Cabool was eight marches north of Ghuznie. During this march some ambassadors came into camp from the Ameer Dost Mahomed, among whom was Nawab Zubber Khan, a brother of the Ameer. He made a request that the English army might leave Afghanistan, but he went away without having persuaded the Burra Sahebs[2] to agree to this. It was curious to see the way these agents continually came into the English camp with the most foolish demands; they showed no fear and relied on the English honour.

179. After the Nawab had left us about three days, news came that the Dost had been deserted by nearly all his followers, and a light column was got ready to pursue him; the officers made sure of his being captured. This column was accompanied by an Afghan by name Hajee Kakur, who said he was well acquainted with all the movements and intentions of the Ameer, and would lead the column by a short road right down upon him; but after several forced marches and halts— these latter always counselled by this Kakur,—the Ameer managed to escape over the hills into the country beyond Cabool; but all his camp and guns were captured. The Shah, when he heard that the Dost had escaped, demanded the head of Kakur, as he had found out he was a traitor. The English

[1] *Qāṣid*, Ar., messenger.—*Ed.* [2] Political Officers.—*Tr.*

did not give him up, but made him prisoner, and sent him to Hindoostan.

180. The army entered Cabool without any fighting, and the Shah was proclaimed King; but here, as at Candahar, the people took no part in the rejoicings—they were all made by the Shah's own soldiers and court. The hearts of the people were with the Ameer, not with Shah Soojah.

181. The Shah had murdered, in open durbar, a number of prisoners taken at Ghuznie, among whom were some of the heads of Afghan families. This act disgusted the English officers very much, and enraged the Caboolees against him. Lad Macnaten Saheb was also highly displeased, and informed the Shah that the English army would be withdrawn if ever anything of this kind took place again. It had been well if it had then left this wretched country. The Shah had been placed on the throne, the Ameer driven out of Afghanistan, but it was well known that rebellion would take place the instant the Feringhee army left. Shah Soojah and all his party dreaded this, and I believe it was through their earnest entreaties that the Sirkar allowed its army to remain. The Caboolees talked openly in the bazars, that the Shah would be king only as long as the *souruck khulaij*[1] (red people; alluding to their coats) remained to protect him.

182. The army went into quarters at Cabool: some officers added to the Native houses, others occupied buildings in the outskirts of the city; and life was very much like that passed in Hindoostan. Soon it became very cold—such severe cold as never was felt in our country. The sepoys suffered terribly; they lost the use of their limbs, and all their blood was frozen in their veins. The English soldiers who came from Europe did not suffer so much; but numbers of these were *palu margia* (frost bitten) and affected with *biwaee* (sores caused by cold; probably chillblains). Snow fell as deep as a man was high. Provisions were very dear. We Hindus never dare bathe, as, if we did so, it was almost certain death. We had no comfort,

[1] Apparently *surkh khalā,iq*, an incorrect term. —*Ed.*

no ease; and we had never received any of the vaunted presents which the Shah so profusely promised, to induce us to come into his accursed country.

183. Before the cold weather set in, several regiments of the Bombay army were sent back to Hindoostan. I believe this force went by Jugduluck and the Khyber—much the nearest way, with no deserts to pass through; but there was the fear of meeting the Sikh troops, who would have been delighted to attack the Feringhees, although their Government was supposed to be at peace with the Sirkar. Our army was much reduced, but for some time everything went on peacefully.

184. The Afghans soon, however, began to chafe at the occupation of their country by the English, and complained that what Lad Macnaten Saheb had said should be done, was not adhered to, which was, that as soon as the Shah was secured on his throne, the army would march back to Hindoostan. They pointed out that the King had been restored, yet the Feringhees remained. Macnaten Saheb showed that a great part of the army had been sent back, but they complained all had not departed, and that, in reality, the English held possession of their country. The Lad Saheb said that the Sirkar did not consider the Afghans as enemies at all, only those who resisted Shah Soojah, the rightful heir to the throne. The Afghans replied, they had a right to have whatever king they chose. And thus there were endless disputes between the Sirdars and the English durbar.

185. Although all this was going on, many of the Afghan gentlemen became, apparently, great friends with the Sahebs, and Afghan *ushraf-zadees*[1] (ladies of quality) used to visit the officers secretly. In this country, the women are allowed to walk about with a *boorka*[2] (thick veil) on, through which they can see without being seen; and the Sahebs living in houses in the city gave great opportunities for *luger sazee*[3] (intrigue).

[1] *Sharīf-zādī*; *ashrāf* the pl. is vulgarly used for the singular.—*Ed.*

[2] *Burq'a*, the long women's cloak with a network for the eyes.—*Ed.*

[3] *Laggā-sāzī*, a wrong construction.—*Ed.*

The women liked the Feringhees because they were fair; in Cabool, they pride themselves on being fair, and the whiter a woman is, the more beautiful she is considered. These proceedings gave rise to great jealousies, and more than one officer was stabbed or fired at. True it is, women are the cause of all evil! Several ladies of rank used to go to the Burra Sahebs: some said they were sent by their husbands, for political objects; others declared business of another kind took them there;—but, certain it was, that their husbands might have known they were in the habit of going to the officers' houses, as, latterly, there was very little concealment used. It was a matter of wonder to us how this could go on, when the Feringhees were talked of by the whole population in the bazars with great contempt, and always were called "cursed Kaffirs." There is no going to the end of the fancies of a woman. They may have been sent, in the first place, to try and gain some knowledge of the designs of the Sirkar; but it was currently reported that they liked the Sahebs better than their own husbands. Shree Sookhdaojee[1] says—"Women of low degree leave their husbands. This is the custom all over the world, and has been so from ever." But these women were not low caste, for some were the wives of the Sirdars themselves, and they did not leave their husbands' protection.

CHAPTER X.

186. The English raised some Afghan regiments, and the men took service, on account of their having heard of the regularity with which the pay was issued. One of the Captains of our (the Shah's) force was made Commander of a regiment.

187. The Ameer Dost Mahomed was known to have gone towards Bokhara, and it was said he was a prisoner there, but after a while reports arrived that he had escaped, and was

[1] Shrī Shŭkdeo Jī, son of the editor of the Vedas; he lived about 800 B.C.—*Ed.*

coming with an army to fight the English. A force from our army was sent to attack him and fought a battle at a town called *Sighan*, at which the newly raised Afghan regiment refused to act, and even threatened their officers, if they were made to do so; but in spite of this, the English beat the Ameer, and for a second time he fled; nearly all his followers dispersed, a few only remaining with him.

188. Occasionally the English were beaten in some small engagements that took place after this, but the Ameer gained no decided advantage, and more of the Sirkar's troops having arrived in Cabool, he gave up the contest, and to the astonishment of the Afghans, as well as the Feringhees, he came to Cabool, and gave himself up as a prisoner, accompanied by his favourite son. The Sirkar sent him to Hindoostan and confined him at Calcutta.

189. There were great rejoicings in Shah Soojah's court, for all his enemies were disposed of. But who can govern a people where the ruler is hated? The Afghans all thought that through the Shah's influence the Dost would be slain, and some of them said he was taken to Hindoostan because the English were afraid of executing him in Cabool. When the Sirdars who were enemies of the Shah heard this, they were also afraid that they would be seized and sent out of their country, therefore they were in a great state of excitement. These Sirdars worked upon the feelings of the hill tribes, assuring them that they would all be made subject to the English. Several small rebellions took place, but they were soon quelled, for the Afghans dreaded the deadly vollies of musketry of the "red coats."

190. About two years after the English first came to Cabool, a rebellion broke out in the city itself. At first it was commenced by only a few of the most discontented Afghans; but they surrounded the Burra Saheb Burnes's house, set fire to it, and when he was escaping through the garden by a small door, he was cut down by his own Afghan servant. Two or three other English officers were also killed. After the report spread about that Burnes Saheb had been murdered, the mob joined

in the attack, and fighting took place all over the city. This outburst was so sudden that our officers were quite unprepared for it; their force was divided, some part lived in the city and the other near the Badshahi-Bagh, one *coss* off; still the English held their own. Every day tribes came in to join the fray, and treachery showed itself even in the Shah's own court.

191. Now came misfortunes and calamity upon the English; all their stores were looted or burnt by the enemy, and the spirits of the army were much depressed; the cold was so intense that it rendered the Hindoostanee portion of the army next to useless. It was soon rumoured that Akbar Khan, the son of the Dost, had arrived with many troops, and that he commanded in person; fighting went on every day, and the Europeans having no good food, lost spirit and could not fight as they always did before; in every direction there were enemies. Numerous attempts were made to drive the enemy from their position—sometimes these succeeded, but they were always attended by great loss to the English. My regiment was engaged at the battle of Behmeru, and was driven back with great loss, and behaved in a most cowardly manner. The men were not accustomed to fighting, and all repented having come to the country. In the cantonments, we were annoyed now night and day by round shot. The enemy seemed to increase by thousands, their *jezails* (long matchlocks) carried further than the Sirkar's muskets, and although the enemy never stood a regular charge, still as long as they had cover behind walls, houses, &c., their fire was very distressing.

192. The Afghans were repeatedly driven from the hills round Cabool, but as soon as we retired, they reoccupied them again in greater force than ever. The Afghans being clothed in sheep-skins called *nimchees* or *postcens*,[1] often escaped sword cuts, and even musket balls were turned off by their dress; the general opinion was that some of them, especially a tribe called

[1] *Postīn* is a general term; *nīmcha* is a short *postīn*, not a common word.—*Ed.*

Bedooranees,[1] were invulnerable. I one day saw a party of their horsemen come within twenty paces of a ravine where a regiment of ours was concealed; the officers made the men reserve their fire, and then the whole regiment springing up delivered their fire, but not more than three or four horses went away without riders. This dispirited the sepoy army very much, and the cold increasing, we were helpless; men lost the use of their fingers and toes, which fell off after great suffering. The whole English army was in a miserable plight, the men worn down by continued fighting and watching, bad food, &c.

193. Our army was in two places as I have said, which much weakened its power. The enemy had possession of the Shah Bagh (king's garden), and from it were enabled to annoy us very much: several attempts were made to regain this garden, without success —the only result being a great loss of men, which we could ill afford. Orders were sent to Ghuznie and Candahar to push on all the Sirkar's and Shah's forces, but the messengers most likely were murdered. After a while, a Ghoorka force endeavoured to join us, which was commanded by a Saheb, but this was all cut to pieces, and only two officers escaped to Cabool. This misfortune made matters worse, as we began to think this would be the fate of all the other troops the Sirkar had in the country.

194. At this time a circumstance occurred which I had never heard of or seen before. The Sirdars sent in messengers dictating terms to the Sirkar's army; they stated that the English army was in their power, and that they could entirely destroy it whenever they thought fit, but that they would spare it on condition that it immediately left the country. When this was known I saw many Sahebs shed tears of vexation, and they laid the blame of all this humiliation on their Generals and leaders whom they said were too old, and nearly useless. A cessation of fighting occurred for a few days, during which the enemy sent in more agents: all kinds of reports now flew about our camp; some said an immediate retreat would be effected, or that the whole army would lay down their arms;

[1] *Durrānī?—Ed.*

others said that the army would still fight. Nothing of good seemed to come from these negotiations; and fighting began again worse than ever.

195. Then at last the burra Saheb Macnauten, sent to say he would agree to the terms offered, and the Ameer Akbar Khan himself came to have a meeting; soon it was known that the Lad Saheb and the General had agreed to give up hostages. In two or three days after this the army left the Bala Hissar, and all came into cantonments: this was done without any opposition being offered. Now was the time I spoke of when the extraordinary courage of the officers' ladies came forth. They were all against giving up hostages, and when, not listening to their advice, these were given, all those Sahebs who had wives were followed by them into confinement. The Sirdars promised provisions and carriage for our army, but it never was forthcoming; the force remained some time longer in a wretched condition, but during this period it was not molested by the Afghans, any further than they did their utmost to prevent provisions reaching our camp, the price of which was perfectly absurd, and great misery was endured by all: but more particularly by the European officers, for all they could get to eat was dried fruit and parched corn.

196. One day when the Burra Saheb and his A.D.C. were at a meeting with the Sirdars, a report came that Macnauten Saheb had been killed by Akbar's own hand: soon the shouts of the people were heard like the noise of the wind before a *toofan*[1] (storm), and firing was soon directed into our camp. The news of the Lad Saheb's death was true: both the Commissioners had now been murdered. The General Saheb was going to take vengeance on the city for the treachery, but the officers represented that their men were too weak to take the offensive; however, it would have been better to have been killed fighting than massacred in a retreat as was afterwards the case. Wisdom seemed to have departed from everyone, and the usual energy displayed by the English officers was

[1] *Tūfān.—Ed.*

gone; they had undergone such severe trials, and misfortune had depressed their spirits. Reports said that Shah Soojah had joined the other Ameers against the English, because he was afraid, now that things had gone so much against them, of appearing to be their friend.

197. Now began the retreat of our army, in the midst of the cold season, and with snow four feet deep. The first march out of Cabool no annoyance was given by the Afghans; the second passsd over quietly, but on the third day the camp followers and baggage all crowded among the column, and threw it into endless confusion. The Afghans seeing this, began to harass the army day and night, and they fired from the hills into the column, in which everyone was as helpless as a prisoner with handcuffs on.

198. Akbar Khan himself was following, and when complaints were made to him of this treachery, he swore it all took place against his will, and that he could not restrain the Ghazees. More officers were demanded, and given up as hostages. Why this was agreed to, I do not know, except it was that sense had left the brains of everyone as I have said before; because as they got the officers into their power, so was our army deprived of leaders: every Saheb that was taken away was as bad as two hundred men lost. At last the Afghans said they would only protect the English army on condition that the General was given up. To the amazement of every one he agreed to go, for, with the example of the two Burra Sahebs, Burnes and Macnauten, what could he expect? When the General Saheb left, all discipline fell away; everybody did what he chose; the consequence of which was, the Afghans were enabled to annoy us and cut off more men than ever. A number of sepoys and servants went over to the enemy under the idea that their lives might be saved.

199. My regiment was nowhere, and I attached myself to the remains of a regiment of *gora log*,[1] thinking that by stick-

[1] British Infantry.—*Tr.*

ing to them I might have some chance of getting out of this detested country. But alas! alas! what is predestined by fate, who can withstand? We went on fighting and losing men at every step: we were attacked in front, in rear, and from the tops of the hills: in truth it was hell itself. I cannot describe its horrors. At last a high wall of stones blocked up the road, and in trying to force this, our whole party was destroyed; the men fought like gods, not men, but numbers prevailed against them. I was struck down by a jezail ball on the side of my head, after which I knew nothing until I found myself tied crossways upon a horse, which was rapidly led away from the fighting towards Cabool, and I now learned I was to be taken there and sold as a slave. I prayed to be shot, or to have my throat cut, and I poured abuse in Pushtoo and my own language on the Afghans. Many a knife shook in its sheath, but my captor could not prevent my speaking, and as no fear of death had any effect on me, he threatened to make me a Mussulman on the spot,[1] if I did not remain quiet. What dreadful carnage I saw along the road—legs and arms protruding through the snow, Europeans and Hindoostanees half buried, horses and camels all dead! It was a sight I shall never forget as long as I live.

200. My captor, after having seen that I desired death beyond anything else, began to be more merciful, and I was taken from the horse and tied in a *kujawah* (pannier) on a camel, which, bad as it was, was better then hanging head downwards from a pony. The Afghan rubbed my wound with snow, which took away the pain; the ball only ploughed up the skin where it grazed off my skull. In four or five days we reached Cabool, and I was clothed in Afghan garments, and sold in the market place as a slave.

201. The rich Afghans set value on Hindoostanees and had many as servants. I was a fine-looking strong man, and I fetched 40 tillahs (Rs. 240); one Osman Beg[2] purchased me. At the same time I was sold, there were several other sepoys,

[1] *i.e.*, circumcise him.—*Ed.*

[2] *'Usmān Beg.—Ed.*

and some few Europeans also for sale; these latter were intended to be used as instructors to the Afghan army, and being supplied with some skins of Shiraz wine did not appear to lament their fate as we did. I saw one Saheb among the Europeans—he belonged to the Company Bahadoor's army; he spoke to me, and said that the Sirkar would soon send a large army and re-conquer the country, and that if our lives were spared we should all be rescued. I think he said his name was Wallan (perhaps Wheeler), I have forgotten now if I name him rightly, but his words gave me some comfort.

202. I was not treated very unkindly by my new master, but the threat was held over me if I did not obey, or attempted to escape, that I should be made a eunuch, and sold for a large sum to attend some harem. My master being able only to make me understand very little in his language, gave orders I should be taught Farsee (Persian). I should have killed myself during my captivity, had I not felt certain the words of Wallan Saheb would come true, and that it would not be long before I should be able to escape. I was put under a Moulvie, one Mahomed Suffee,[1] who at first did nothing but revile me, calling me *mooshric*[2] (idolator); but when he saw I took pains to learn his accursed language, he changed his tune and tried all his persuasions to make me become a Mussulman:—

Uyan nu shood ki kooja amudum kooja boodum.[3]
Dirigh o durd ke gafil zi kari khwest tunum.[4]

"Where I am now I do not know, nor even where I first came from. Alas! alas! I have forgotten my own self!"

I did not become a Mussulman, but strove to bear up against

[1] *Muḥammad Ṣafī.—Ed.*

[2] *Mushrik*, one that attributes 'partnership' (*shirkat*) to the Deity: a polytheist.—*Ed.*

[3] The Soobadar has introduced these lines of Persian, but I do not see how they apply much, probably to show his knowledge of Persian.—*Tr.*

[4] عیان نشد که کجا آمدم کجا بودم
دریغ و درد که غافل ز کار خویشتنم The lines are apposite.—*Ed.*

my hard fate. I was at first chiefly employed in preparing tobacco for my master, and was thankful I had no more degrading work to perform. When it was known I could keep accounts, Osman Beg entrusted me to keep his, and from this circumstance I became of more importance in his family.

CHAPTER XI.

203. Upon the news of the total destruction of the Feringhee armies (for it was reported that their forces had been destroyed at Ghuznie and Candahar as well as at Cabool), great rejoicings were made in the city. Shah Soojah, who, though he sided with the Ameer when he saw the sudden change affairs had taken, was looked on with suspicion. The people of the country execrated him, because he had brought ruin upon the land, by introducing a Feringhee army to come and put him on his throne. He remained in the palace in the Bala Hissar, and still seemed to be the king; but his reign lasted only a short time, for one day when he was going out of the palace to visit the camp of the Sirdars, he was fired upon by some Baruckzyes and killed on the spot. Sirdar Futteh Jung seized the throne. Ameer Ukbar Khan, however, hastened back to Cabool with a part of his force, and drove him from the city, and it was said he took flight to the English army which was coming into the country.

204. I made several endeavours to see some of the Saheb log who were said to be in Cabool as prisoners, but on account of the guards round the places of their confinement I only once succeeded in seeing five Sahebs and three ladies, who were kept in a small building in the city; but I was unable to do them good. I could only tell them that the general report was that an English army had arrived in the country, and this seemed to give them some consolation. I promised to let them know when it approached. One officer told me, that repeated threats had been made to them of being sent out of the country and

sold as slaves, which he was much afraid would be done before the army could reach the place; and he complained that they were all much annoyed by the mob, who often came and abused them. He also made great inquiries about General Elphinstone Saheb, who was a prisoner; but this officer must have been kept outside the city, as I never could find where he was. This meeting took place late in the evening, and I came pretending I had been sent by the Ameer with some tobacco, but I was subjected to so severe a scrutiny that I dare not go again, and was thankful to have escaped with my life.

205. The approach of the English army was now talked of daily; the report stated that the passes had been all forced by the Sirkar's troops, and that many lakhs of men were coming to take Afghanistan. Fear now came upon all the people, and they repented of the massacre; but the chief blame was now cast on the Ghazees. Numbers of the more wealthy inhabitants now left the city. I endeavoured one day to interest my master about the Saheb log, who were captives, and told him he would be well rewarded if he assisted them in any way; this was only met by abuse, and the former threat repeated. Although my dress was like an Afghan's, still my voice always betrayed me, and I dare not go again to look after the English officers, and as I had no money I could bribe no one. I tried, however, to gain over a young boy who brought meat to my master's house, and whom I heard once express a desire to see Calcutta, and the wonders of the Feringhees, and who said he should accompany a *kafila* (caravan) to India, when he was rich enough. I wrote a small note in the Hindee language in Persian characters, and entrusted it to him to give to one of the Sahebs; but as I never saw him again, I do not know if he ever delivered it, or, if he did, whether its purport was understood. It was to say, that the English army was reported to be within ten days' march of Cabool. As the army approached, the fear became greater, and my master determined to fly from the city. I tried in vain to explain to him that I knew the Feringhee customs, and he would not be molested, as he had never taken

any part against them; but he would not believe me, and therefore he left the place.

206. I was now so constantly watched, I had no opportunity of escape. My master took the road with his family to Istalif, and I now gave up all hopes of regaining my freedom. This place was by the side of a hill, with deep *khuds*[1] all round, nearly unapproachable; the people had defended it by thick walls of stones, and small towers. The Afghans thought they could defend this place against the whole world —and very likely they could against any men but English soldiers.

207. After a while, we heard Cabool had been taken, also Ghuznie, and Candahar; then that a force was coming to attack Istalif—so my master retired still further over the mountains, to Sheerkudo. On the road to this place, we were told that the English had driven the Afghans out of Istalif with great slaughter, and destroyed the town.

208. For seven months my master remained at Sheerkudo. I was very unhappy, not knowing which way to go if I did effect my escape from bondage. I had now learned to read and write Persian very fairly, but I could never pass myself off as a native of the country, on account of the difference in pronunciation. For a long time no news arrived of the English, and hope began to leave my breast. I became quite reckless of life at the idea of remaining a slave. How bitterly I repented having left my old regiment! At last the news reached this out-of-the-way place, that the English had burnt the whole of the city of Cabool, and had returned to India.

209. Several Afghan families went back to their homes, and when my master heard from some friend that these reports were true, he made preparations to return also, and we arrived in Cabool just as the snow was commencing to fall. The city had not been burnt, but the Ali Murdan (the bazar) had been totally destroyed. The inhabitants had not been molested,

[1] *Khad*, a hill-side, the side of a ravine.—*Ed.*

which much astonished the people, for all who had the means left the city, fearing retribution.

210. It was now more than three years since I had entered this vile country, during which time I had never heard from my own family or of my father's. I wondered who had taken care of mine, supposing they were still alive, and how they managed to exist. Many doubts filled my mind. My master was not unkind to me, but I was made to do many things against my caste, without consideration as to the horror it inspired in my breast.

211. Now that the English had left the country, my chances of escape were so much reduced, that I almost gave up the idea. However, in a few months my master had occasion to go on business to Ghuznie, and I was left behind. As I had not for a long time lamented my lot, or said anything about escaping, I was not watched so much now, and had greater liberty allowed me. I had made friends with one Ahmed Shah, a leader of a *kafila* which used to go every year to Hindoostan; and as he knew every town in my own country, being also well known to many merchants in Oude,[1] I opened my heart to him, about my wish to be free. I told him, if he would connive at my escape, I would be able to pay him a handsome sum on reaching India. After a great deal of haggling he agreed to let me go with him as his servant, upon my promising to pay 500 rupees on reaching India, which agreement he made me write on paper. After I had done this, I was much afraid he would disclose my secret; but I comforted myself with the thought that he would not gain so much by betraying me as by assisting me.

212. In a few days his camels were ready to depart. I bought a dirty set of garments, pulled my hair down over my face, and burnt the ends with lime, so as to make it look as much like a Pushtooree's as possible. I cast up all my master's accounts, and left even the clothes he had given me; the only

[1] *Avadh* or *Awdh.—Ed.*

thing I took was a long knife. Early one morning I left Cabool with a kafila of 175 camels, but I soon found my situation as servant, though only assumed, was in reality a very hard one. Ahmed Shah was very hot tempered, and used to pour forth abuse on me in my own language, which was hard to bear. I had to attend on the camels, lead them to feed, and to do the regular work of a camel-man. I bore up against all this, and as the kafila distanced Cabool, my heart began to rejoice at the prospect of escape. But, suddenly, from some news which came to the master of the caravan, that it was dangerous to attempt passing through the Punjab by the north, on account of the disturbed state of the country, and the numerous and heavy duties which were sure to be levied, Ahmed Shah determined to go by another route, that of Dehra Ismael Khan. I was now in great fear that, as we were taking the road to Ghuznie, I might meet my old master and be claimed. I kept, therefore, a sharp look-out for any party of travellers attended by horsemen, as I knew my former master had hired some to escort him to Ghuznie.

213. About two marches before arriving at the Killa Ghuznie, Osman Beg and his party passed our *kafila*. I saw him at a distance, and at once made up my mind to use the pistol with which I had been furnished, either against him or myself, sooner than be taken back into slavery. It was an anxious moment, and any mistake on my part would have been sure to lead to my detection. I happened to be at the time on the same side of the string of camels that he must pass, so I changed over to the other, and commenced making the loud noises of the Afghans when driving camels, which sounds are quite different from those the drivers make in Hindoostan. As the party passed, my former master called out to know whose *kafila* it was, and how many days we had been coming from Cabool. As fate would have it, the next man to me answered, and thus saved my speaking, which might have betrayed me. Osman Beg and his horsemen moved on without noticing me, and my chances of escape were now more cheering. I felt greater relief

when I saw the spears of his escort become small in the distance, than I did when the Pindarees departed from the tomb in Bundelkund. Few people have been exposed to such trials twice.

214. After leaving Ghuznie, the *kafila* struck off to the east, and by paying the tribes in the hills, we got through, wonderful to say, without being annoyed, and arrived at Dehra Ismael Khan, which belonged to the Sikhs. Here heavy duties were levied before the *kafila* was allowed to move on. Although I was not yet in my own country, I felt very happy at being out of the vile country of the Afghans, and at having recrossed the Indus.

215. At Dehra Ismael Khan I heard the English were fighting in Scinde, and I wanted Ahmed Shah to take the *kafila* down that way; but he had determined to go straight to Ferozepore. After a great deal of trouble from the Sikh authorities, who were constantly making demands for some tax or other on the *kafila*, in October 1843 we reached Ferozepore.

216. As the buildings in cantonments became visible, I could hear the drums and bugles of the regiments, and I was overcome with joy; but Ahmed Shah would not let me go up to the cantonments till he had made his own arrangements in the serai, and could go with me; he would not let me out of his sight a moment. After the camels were unloaded and sent out to feed, both of us mounted and set off for the cantonments. I went with him to the Brigade Major's, and we were ordered out of the compound, as the Saheb wanted no fruit.[1] I then spoke to the orderlies in their own language, and explained my situation, requesting to see the Saheb. When I did see him, it was not of much use, as he would not believe me, and also told me that, supposing my tale were true, he was quite certain the Government would not pay so much as Rs. 500, or indeed anything, for my ransom.

[1] Afghans are in the habit of going round to the houses in Cantonments, selling fruits, nuts, tobacco, etc.—*Tr.*

217. I then went to the Magistrate, and told him my tale, claiming deliverance from being a slave, which Ahmed Shah, now that he saw I was not likely to obtain any money, loudly proclaimed me to be. The Saheb at first refused to listen to me, but when he found I knew all the officers in several regiments, he began to give me more attention. Still he refused to advance me any money, and he also said the Sirkar would never do so.

218. I tried one last resource, and went to the Burra Commissioner Saheb, and by good fortune saw a Subedar of my late regiment on guard; he had been promoted into some other corps. I made myself known to him, but he at first would not credit my story, till I spoke to him in Hindee, and told him facts which put all doubt out of his mind. He went with me to the Commissioner Saheb, who was very attentive to my story, and asked me a hundred questions about the army in Cabool; but he also said he did not think the Government would pay my ransom. However, the Subedar agreed to pay Rs. 250, and the Saheb, after the Subedar declared he knew my family were well off in Oude, advanced me the remainder. My *dust-a-kut*[1] (note of promise) was retained, the affair entered in some book, and I was free; but without a pice, and nothing remaining to me but my dirty Afghan clothes.

219. I went to the lines of one of the regiments, but when I informed the sepoys who I was, they all declared I was unclean and defiled—some even accused me of having been made a Mussulman; therefore, until I could regain my caste, I could look for no *mohubut*[2] (friendship) from my own people! This greatly mortified me, and I almost wished I had remained in Cabool, where at any rate I was not treated unkindly.

220. I returned to the Brigade Major, with spirits cast down. After I told him the Burra Saheb had paid a part of my ransom, he agreed to take me to the Brigadier Saheb, who was very kind to me indeed. He knew my old regiment, and informed me it was now at Delhi. I was furnished with some

[1] *Dast-khatt.—Ed.* [2] *Muḥabbat.—Ed.*

money, and allowed to live in his compound. He also wrote to the Adjutant-General Saheb about me, in order that I should be reinstated in my old regiment. I threw off the Afghan clothes I had now worn for one year and seven months, and having been shaven and shorn, I became more like a soldier in appearance; but I was still shunned by all my brethren—in fact, was an outcaste. The Brigadier Saheb often called me into the verandah, and asked me about my adventures in Cabool, and took great interest in me. It was entirely through him that I owed my good fortune in being looked on with favour by the Sirkar.

221. After some time, I received orders to join my former regiment at Delhi, and being furnished with the means by some officers who were exceedingly kind to me, I marched down to Delhi, and reported my arrival to my Colonel Saheb. He was very much pleased to see me, and seemed to have quite forgotten all about my court-martial. I was a supernumerary for some time, and as soon as there was a vacancy I was restored to my former place as havildar in my regiment.

222. I had written home, and here received an answer. My wife was dead (first one), also my mother, and my old friend the Pundit. My father wished me to come home, and promised to pay the Rs. 250, which he said he would send me by a hoondie. All this time I was treated by the Brahmins as an outcaste, and could only associate with Mussulmans, and Christian drummers and musicians, who were the only people that would speak to me. The officers knew this and were very kind to me; but as I had no money, I could not regain my caste just then.

223. When the time for furlough came round, I was allowed to take mine. But what changes I found at my home; my father had become an old man, and my younger brother managed everything for him. The news of my having been made a slave had reached my village, and I was not allowed to remain in my father's house. I found my brother my enemy, as he had long supposed me to be dead, and looked forward to suc-

ceeding to the estate. My father paid for my regaining my caste, which I proved was forcibly taken away. This time it did not cost so much. I was not, however, happy, as I could hear no news of my Thakoorin wife: she had remained with my old regiment some time, and then suddenly disappeared. Some said she had returned to her own country, others hinted that she had gone off with some sepoy. My son had been removed to another regiment, which had gone to Scinde, and nothing had been heard of him for two years. I had some small sum of money which belonged to my first wife; with this I paid off the Rs. 250 Subedar Kooshial Doobay [1] had lent me.

224. My father tried all in his power to induce me to leave the service, and live with him; but my heart yearned after my son and my wife, and I knew I should never find them by remaining at home. I therefore determined to set off for Bundelkund in search of my wife, and went direct to the village where a brother of hers was living. When I arrived there, and discovered that her brother was a proud Rajpoot, owning a considerable property, and, though not above me in caste, yet greatly above me in position, my heart began to fail me, as to what reception I might experience. I however made up my mind, and boldly stated I had come to obtain my wife, and to my great delight found her living under her brother's protection.

225. I was allowed to take her away to my home, where I left her in the care of my father, and set off to rejoin my regiment at Delhi. But I had now no spirit and was almost tired of life. When I was in Cabool the hope of effecting my escape kept me up; every day I was occupied with dreams of being again free. Now I had returned, what had I gained? I had obtained no promotion, no rewards for all I had undergone; six months' pay was owing to me, which I had little chance of recovering. I had spent a large sum to regain my liberty, and my caste, and owed a considerable sum to a Saheb be-

[1] *Kushal Dūve.—Ed.*

sides. I became ill, and remained a long time on the sick report.[1]

226. During this time I had solicited my Colonel Saheb to present my petition to the Sirkar, which he promised to do. In it, I stated how long I had served the Sirkar, how many battles I had been in, how I had been wounded, etc., and that I had entered the Shah's army by the express desire of an officer, and with the promise of promotion and better pay. I then mentioned that I had obtained no promotion, that I was owed six months' pay, had been captured when wounded, and sold as a slave; that I had effected my escape by promising to give Rs. 500, had lost one year and seven months towards my pension, and I entreated the Sirkar in mercy to listen to my prayer.

227. After waiting six months, the Colonel Saheb informed me that the Sirkar would pay my ransom, but as there were no accounts to show how many months' arrears were due to me, or to any of the Shah's force, the money could not be given, unless I could obtain some officer of my late regiment to certify how many months' pay were due at the time of the retreat.

CHAPTER XII.

228. As the day I joined the remains of the European corps at Cabool was the last on which I saw any of my own regiment, I imagine all the officers must have been killed. I repeated all the names I could remember to the Colonel Saheb, but he was unable to tell me where one officer was. I was in great good fortune to get my *noul bundee*[2] (ransom) even paid, but it was all the Colonel Saheb's doing; I should never have obtained this if he had not been to me as a father. Although I had regained my caste, and was made a good deal of by the officers,

1 The mysterious disease produced by *fikr*. "There is no fire more destructive than anxiety;"—Saying.—*Ed.*

2 *Na'l-bandī*, this word is now obsolete in this sense.—*Ed.*

still I was looked on with jealousy by the men of my regiment. I had prevented a naique and a sepoy getting their promotion by returning, and was constantly taunted with having had *rounut*[1] performed on me (being made a Mussulman), also with having eaten beef while with the European soldiers in Cabool.

229. The disasters of the Sirkar in Afghanistan began to be greatly talked of all over India, and many declared that the English were not invincible. This was specially the case at Delhi, and from this time I imagine the idea entered the minds of the Mussulmans, that they would one day be able to drive the Sirkar out of the country. The sepoys were discontented; they found they were liable to be required to cross the Indus at any time. They complained that the Sirkar had not performed the promises which were made to induce them to go to Afghanistan, and now they had returned, they had gained nothing, neither promotion nor *inam* (reward). The Mussulmans boasted that they all came originally from Cabool and Persia, and could fight the Sirkar as well as the Afghans. Several emissaries from the court of the Badshah at Delhi came into our lines, and tried to find out the temper and general feeling of the army. When the sepoys pointed out how easily the Sirkar had retaken Cabool, these people replied, that had not the Feringhee army returned so quickly, the second army, when the cold weather set in, would have been as easily destroyed as the first. As I have before mentioned, I was always looked upon with some degree of suspicion in my regiment. I myself was not spoken to on the subject, but still I heard the matter openly discussed.

230. I reported all this to the Quartermaster Saheb, who only laughed at me, and I went to the Colonel Saheb, who listened to me very attentively, but he said he was afraid I had brought an accusation against the regiment through spite, and he warned me not to talk to him on such a subject again. He was of opinion it was all the idle talk of the bazars. Of course,

[1] Evidently an error for *sunnat*.—*Ed.*

after this reprimand, I did not report anything more to any Saheb, as it only did me harm.

231. After the Cabool war, and the Scinde campaign, most of the Sirkar's regiments from Delhi to Ferozepore were ready for mutiny and only the wonderful fortune of the Sirkar prevented a general rising. The sepoys complained that extra batta had been promised, to persuade them to go to Scinde, and that after they had marched there, it was declared to be a mistake, or that it never had been authorized, though their commanding officers told them they would certainly get it. You, my Lord, were in India then, and know that several regiments were in mutiny. In only four or five did this show itself very openly ; but discontent was deeply seated in all, and many people expected a general mutiny throughout the army. Mahomedan agents were at work in every station, and numbers of Afghan, Persian, and other spies, who promised that if the army would rise, their countries would join it against the Feringhee, to wipe off the disgrace they had suffered in Cabool in having had their bazar destroyed. They also said they would restore the throne of Hindoostan to the Delhi Badshah. Every Rajah and Nawab was sounded, and, if friendly to the scheme, proposals were made to him to assist in getting rid of the English.

232. It is true many had just cause of complaint. I myself had been promised promotion and extra pay, but neither the one nor the other had I obtained ; the Sirkar had, however, paid for my ransom, and I was free, instead of being a slave. The recollection of this was never absent from my mind.

233. The year passed without any further signs of disaffection. It was well known at Delhi, that during the Afghan war the Sirkar itself had been in fear, and had ordered the artillery to fire more than usual that year, to remind the inhabitants of its power; but the disasters in Cabool went a long way to show that the Sirkar was not so invincible as had always been supposed, and it certainly was not feared now so much as formerly.

234. Another year passed away, and then the rumours of discontent, together with the excitement, subsided. At this time the Sikhs were said to be anxious to try their power with the Sirkar. Their army was very large, well drilled, and felt confident of beating the *Ungreese*[1] army. The Sirkar now began to move up regiments towards Umballah and Loodiana, and remained there some time.

235. I think the English officers imagined the Sikhs would confine themselves to blustering on the other side of the river, and would never dare cross it; large bodies of them were seen on the banks of the Sutlej, but none had yet come over. At last, a party of Sikh horsemen crossed the river at Hurreeputtun, and cut up a number of grasscutters, and looted some stores belonging to the Sirkar. This was the first shadow of their intentions; still the Sirkar's officers thought the Sikhs would never invade Hindoostan.

236. More troops were now moved up to Ferozepore, and orders came shortly for my regiment to proceed there, which it did by forced marches in four days.

237. The Khalsa army had a great name, as they had been drilled by *Francese* (French) sahebs, and had muskets like the Sirkar's army. Their guns were innumerable. Most of the sepoy regiments felt afraid of opposing the Sikhs; but several European regiments were among the force, and this gave them more confidence. After a few days some horsemen came rushing into Ferozepore with the news that the Khalsa army had actually crossed the Sutlej, at least five lakhs[2]: and were intending to attack the station. Officers were sent off to see, and they reported that it was true, but that their numbers were about 20,000. There were only seven or eight regiments at Ferozepore, still General Littler Saheb moved out against the Khalsajee; but, to the great amazement of every one their army retired, and did not come to Ferozepore. Afterwards it was said they thought that the whole cantonments had been

[1] *Angrezī.—Ed.* [2] 500,000.—*Tr.*

mined, and that if they attacked the place they would all be blown up; therefore they wished to fight out in the plain.

238. In a few days after this, heavy firing was heard at some distance from Ferozepore. In the evening news came that a battle had been fought: some said the Sirkar's army had been beaten and was retreating on our station; others reported that the Sikhs had been worsted, and their army routed; another rumour was that neither army had won the day, but were occupying the same ground on which the fight had taken place. However, during the evening several officers came in, and it was then known that the Sirkar had been victorious, and many of the Sikh guns had been taken.

239. All the troops were ordered from Ferozepore to join forthwith the other army. We marched at night, and went a good way round, to avoid the Sikhs, who were reported ready on the road to try and cut us off. Next day, at 12 o'clock, we joined the other large division of the Sirkar's army after a long march, in great want of water, very tired, and unfit for fighting; but notwithstanding this, the order was immediately given to prepare for battle. Owing to some movement of the Sikhs, the fight was delayed until the sun was nearly down, and night was closing on us.

240. This was fighting indeed; I had never seen anything like it before. Volleys of musketry were delivered by us at close quarters, and returned as steadily by the enemy. In all former actions I had been in, one or two volleys at close distance were all the Sirkar's enemies would ever stand; but these Sikhs returned volley for volley, and never gave way until nearly decimated. They had their regiments placed between their guns, and behind them: their fire was terrible, such as no sepoy had ever been under. The Sirkar's guns were almost silenced, and the ammunition waggons blown up. I saw two or three European regiments driven back by the weight of the artillery fire; it was like the *bursat* (rains); they fell into confusion; several sepoy regiments did the same.

One European regiment was *kafoor hogia* (evaporated, [1] *i.e.* destroyed), totally swept away; and I now thought the Sirkar's army would be overpowered, and fear filled the minds of many of us.

241. When it was almost dark, a loud shout was heard, which did not sound like that of the Sikhs; a roaring noise of cavalry came next, and the 3rd Dragoons rushed right through into the enemy's entrenchment, and rode over and cut down their gunners. This change was so sudden, and cavalry charging right into batteries such an unheard-of thing, that for a few moments the Sikhs left their guns in perfect amazement.

242. It now became quite dark, and the Sirkar's army left off fighting, but the Sikhs continued firing wherever they saw a light. The force I was with was commanded by General Littler Saheb, and lost its way in the darkness. For fear of marching right into the Sikh camp, we were ordered to lie down. This night was nearly as bad as some of those in Cabool; we dare not light a fire, for fear of the enemy's round shot, no water was to be procured, and we had nothing to eat but what few *chupatties* some men had put in their haversacks. The Sahebs said this was real fighting, and that the Sikhs were noble enemies; still they looked anxious, wondering what the morning would bring forth. The weather was bitter cold, and naught was heard among us but the chattering of teeth on empty stomachs.

243. I remember on this night one Saheb of a regiment next to mine kept walking up and down singing: he was checked by the other officers, but he still continued it. The Saheb was not tipsy, but was trying to comfort himself without the *mess-kote*! It was a dreadful night; the English had not left the ground, and the Sikhs had not been driven from their breast-works; it was *boerd* [2] (a drawn game).

[1] *Kāfūr ho-jānā* in Urdu applied to *people* means "to run away," but to *things* "to disappear." Hindus use it of people in the sense of "to die." The meaning here is ambiguous.—*Ed.*

[2] *Burd.*—*Ed.*

244. When morning dawned, the English army began to get into shape again, and the storming of the Sikh entrenchments was ordered. My column joined that from which it had become separated during the night. The Governor-General Saheb himself rode about the field, speaking to the *gora log* (Europeans), and telling his aides-de-camp to bid us fight like men, and victory was certain.

245. I do not understand how it was, but some said the Governor-General Saheb was under the *jungee Lord Saheb* (Commander-in-Chief); they were both present at the battle, and the Governor-General Saheb obeyed the Commander-in-Chief! It was said the former had been a great General in Belait, and had fought many battles, in one of which he had lost an arm. Lord Guff Saheb[1] was a great favourite with the *gora log*, for whenever he came near a regiment they began cheering him.

246. The Europeans rushed on the batteries, and the Sikhs fled; then the horse artillery came up quite close, and poured grape into the enemy; but the English army was too tired and faint from want of food for pursuit. The Khalsajee got to the ford and crossed over the river. The whole of their camp was captured, and one hundred guns; but the tents had been fired, and powder was continually exploding, by which several men were killed whilst looting. However, a great booty was taken; tents lined with silk and shawls, belonging to the Sirdars, and arms of every description. Many men were severely burnt in trying to save these tents.

247. After this great battle, whilst the English army was cooking their food, the bugles sounded the alarm, and a report came that the whole of the Sikh cavalry was coming down upon us, and soon a fresh army was seen marching straight towards us. The fight began again, but the Sirkar's guns were unable to fire, as they had expended all their ammunition. The Sirkar's *ickbal* was indeed great, for without any apparent cause the Sikh army retreated. Great was the astonishment of every one, for these were all fresh troops; some said that they sudden-

[1] Lord Gough.—*Tr.*

ly heard that another army of the Sirkar was in their rear. But whatever was the reason, after firing a few rounds they ceased, and marched away. They were not attacked by the English army, as they never came within musket range. It was supposed there must have been one lakh of cavalry, enough to have surrounded our force and totally destroyed it. Some said that Sirdar Tej Singh was afraid to fight. The Sahebs were as much astonished as any one, and the retreat of the Khalsa gave great confidence to the sepoys, who now thought the Sikhs dare not fight the Sirkar again.

248. Our army halted some days, throwing up entrenchments, and waited for the large guns to come up. An English army was in the rear of the Sikhs, but must have been a long way off at the time, as it did not arrive for some ten days afterwards. Soon we heard there had been an engagement near Loodiana, and that some of the Sirkar's guns had been taken, and also all the camp. Then news came that there had been another battle, in which the enemy had been defeated and all the lost baggage recaptured. This was true.

249. At the beginning of the month, all the armies of the Sirkar had assembled, and the big guns arrived also. It was now a very large force—such a one as had never been seen in India before; but the Sikh army was reported to be at least 60,000 men, with 400 guns.

250. The Sikh army had marched to Sobraon,[1] and had defended the position with one hundred guns. The English force moved at night, and came on the enemy's camp early in the morning. It was evident the Sikhs did not know of its approach; there was great commotion in their camp, and their bugles sounded the alarm. The fight was commenced by the artillery, and the fire was terrible: one part of the Sikh army was on the other side of the river, in their own country, and the other in the Sirkar's boundary; they had a bridge of boats over the river. After three hours, the order was given to charge the batteries. Here, if possible, the fire was more severe than at

[1] *Subrāon.—Ed.*

Pheeroshahur (Ferozeshah); sections of the English army were destroyed by the guns of the Khalsa; but it still stood firm. Several European corps rushed on the guns, followed by some sepoy regiments. It is well known the sepoys dreaded the Sikhs, as they were very strong men; still, in spite of everything, their officers led them on. Through the smoke the flashing swords and helmets of that wonderful regiment the 3rd Dragoons were again seen—they had charged into the batteries a second time. Never was there such fighting in India before

251. At last, there was a tremendous shout, which was taken up by the whole Sirkar's army, that the Sikhs were retreating over their bridge. Both sides of this bridge were defended with guns, but the enemy dared not now to fire from the other side of the river, for fear of killing their own men. They marched down to the bridge in sections, and many regiments got over. The Sirkar's artillery moved close up, and poured in grape at short distance, sweeping down hundreds. Infantry corps came near, and fired volley after volley; but the Khalsajee marched on, and seldom now returned the fire. Not one of them ever asked for mercy. When the bridge was full from one end to the other, it broke, and thousands of the Sikhs fell into the river, which was very deep. Hundreds jumped in, to escape being carried to the bank where the English forces were. The slaughter was frightful; nothing like it have I ever seen before or since. The river was full of struggling masses of men who clung to one another in their despair, and were taken under by the current, to rise no more alive.

252. Near this bridge I narrowly escaped with my life. I saw a large round shot bounding straight into the head of my company, and I called out to my comrades, but somehow the ball turned off, and went through the very place we had moved to in opening out to avoid it; five sepoys and one havildar were swept away by it, and the havildar was thrown many paces by its force; one of the sepoys' muskets was dashed against my breast, and I was struck down senseless, and when I came to myself again I found my regiment had passed on. I was unable

to move, but by good fortune I was picked up afterwards by parties who were sent out for the wounded and taken to hospital.

253. The loss of the Sirkar's forces in this action must have been very heavy; one General Saheb was killed, and I heard one hundred officers were killed or wounded. Everything belonging to the Sikh army was captured, and the plunder was very great. Most of the Sikh soldiers had money concealed in their long hair; some of our sepoys got as much as one hundred Nanukshaee[1] rupees from one dead body.

254. If the river had not been swollen,[2] the Sirkar's cavalry could have cut up hundreds of the enemy, as the river usually was not difficult to cross at this time of year; but the boats with which the bridge was made, when it parted, were carried miles down the river, and all the others near at hand had been set fire to. However, in a day or so more boats were collected, and our army crossed the Sutlej into the Punjab.

CHAPTER XIII.

255. It was always said that the Sikh troops had been drilled by *Francese* Sahebs (French officers) but these had all left before the war; either they had refused to fight against the Sirkar, or else the Sikh Sirdars, jealous of their influence, had used their power to get them turned out. True it was, I never saw any *Velatee*[3] sahebs among the Sikh troops, nor did I hear of any being seen.

256. The Khalsa fought as no man ever did in India before, but it was evident their leaders knew not how to manage an

[1] Rupees coined by the Sikh Government worth somewhat more than the Company's Rupees.—*Tr.*

[2] The river increased in volume of water some four feet the day of the action, which was thought to be a favour from the gods towards the English *Raj*.—*Tr.*

[3] European.—*Tr.*

army: when they had decided advantages in their hands they failed to make any use of them; their cavalry never came near the battle field that I ever heard of; and when I was at Lahore, I heard many Sikhs loudly proclaim Sirdar Tej Singh to be a traitor, and that he well knew at the time he gave out that an English army was in his rear (after the feigned attack at Ferozeshah which I have mentioned) that the said army was many miles away.

257. I remember, close by the head of the bridge, seeing a European soldier about to bayonet, as I thought, a wounded Sikh; but, to my surprise, the man begged for mercy—a thing no Sikh had ever been seen to do during this war—and he also called out in English; the soldier then pulled off the man's turban and jacket; after this I saw him kick the prostrate man, and run him through several times with his bayonet; several other soldiers kicked the body with great contempt, and ran their bayonets through it. Upon enquiry I was told that this was a deserter from some European regiment, who had been fighting with the Sikhs against his comrades.

258. In a few days, the Sirkar's army marched on Lahore, and the whole Punjab was at the feet of the mighty Company Bahadoor, whose power none could withstand, and whom it was useless to attempt to resist. This took place in February 1846, near the end of the month.

259. The Sirdars had a meeting with the Governor-General Saheb, and Lahore was garrisoned with an English force, and the pride of the mighty Khalsa was trampled in the dust. Numbers of the Sikh army came to lay down their arms: it was curious to see these men; they freely acknowledged they had been beaten by the Sirkar, but they said their time would come again one day.

260. It was the general opinion in the Punjab that the Sirkar would take possession of it, as it had done other parts of Hindoostan; but after a treaty was made, by which Rajah Lal Singh became Vizier, and the country of Cashmeer was sold to Maharajah Goolaub Singh, the Sirkar's army retired over the

river to its own territories, leaving the Punjab to itself and its endless disputes.

261. At this period, the fortune of the Sirkar was very high; all idea of resisting it had ceased; and the mutinous feeling in its army I have mentioned as having existed before this war, seemed to have disappeared. Nothing was now talked of but the *nusseeb*[1] (the luck) of the Company Bahadoor, and now that the Khalsa troops had been beaten (who had always been supposed a match for the English army), the very Mahomedans held their peace, and for the time considered it folly to go against fate. But then fortune remains not always the same; who can tell where the seed of the Madar[2] will light?

262. After this war, my regiment was stationed at Umballa, and at the end of the second year of its stay there, I was promoted to Jemadar; I had now been some thirty-five years a servant of the Sirkar's. True, I was a Jemadar! but the visions of wealth I had indulged in when I first took service, where were they? I had nothing to show but some seven wounds, and four medals. I was becoming an old man; however I wore a sword, and was an officer. My eldest son, who had formerly been in the regiment I was with, before I entered the Shah's service, was somewhere in Scinde, and I had not heard of him for two years. Numbers of Native soldiers had been carried off by the terrible fever of that country; and it had such a bad name that the native regiments were with great difficulty persuaded to go there; the heat was greater than in any other part of India. Those sepoys who escaped death from the effects of the fever, were so affected by it that they were seldom any use again, being subject to attacks of the disease long after they had returned to their native country. In the last letter I had received from my son, he stated that 750 men of his regiment

[1] *Naṣīb* pl. is luck, good or bad, and is vulgarly used for *iqbāl* good fortune.—*Ed.*

[2] A plant with a seed like the dandelion, which is blown about by the wind for miles.—*Tr.*

were ill with it, and that half a European regiment had died;[1] he was also in hospital, and gave little hopes of escaping death, as for four weeks before he wrote, he had not been able to move.

263. In 1847 two officers were killed at Mooltan, and to revenge this insult, the Sirkar went to war with Dewan Moolraj of Mooltan, and laid siege to the place. This excited the Sikhs again; they began to collect troops, and their warlike ardour seemed to revive. Another Sikh war was talked of. The Sirkar began to assemble troops, and moved them up towards Ferozepore. My regiment was again ordered to form part of this army. The siege of Mooltan progressed very slowly, and this gave great confidence to the Sikhs, who boasted that this time they should beat the Feringhee.

264. Regiments came in now every day from Delhi, Meerut, Umballa, etc., and were all pushed on towards Ferozepore; a large English force crossed the Sutringe[2] and entered the Punjab; the Sikhs were said to be collected on the banks of the Jhelum, commanded by Sirdar Sheer Singh. After two or three rather heavy skirmishes on the banks of the river, about the end of the year we neared the Sikh army, who were all encamped in very thick jungle, and their advance pickets were only visible. No one could estimate their numbers; the spies brought in word there were 50,000, and that every day their forces increased,—also that they had a vast number of guns.

265. The enemy kept to the jungle and showed no inclination to commence the fight; however, suspense was soon put an end to, as one day the Sikh fired upon the Commander-in-Chief Saheb, with some heavy guns, when he was out riding with his staff. The Lord Saheb became enraged because some one was killed near him, and the order was given to engage at once; this was just as the *guntas*[3] (gongs) were sounding midday, *i.e.*, 12 o'clock, but it was like fighting in the dark, the jungle was so thick. Regiments became mixed—in my own, the Rifle Company No. 10 was ahead of the Grenadier Company; our own regiments were mistaken for the Sikhs, and volleys were

[1] 78th Highlanders.—*Tr.* [2] Sutlej.—*Tr.* [3] *Ghaṇṭā.*—*Ed.*

delivered one at the other before the mistake was found out.

266. The Commanding officer of my own corps suffered much from fever, and was obliged to go away sick a few days only before the fight. Another Colonel Saheb was sent to the regiment just as it was going into action, and the firing had commenced: he saw the red coats of the enemy, and imagined them to be one of our regiments: immediately he stopped the firing, saying he was sure we were firing into our friends; some of the officers then said they could see the black belts on the men of the other regiment, and were certain they were Sikhs (the Sikh army had black belts, or very brown ones;—the English sepoys pure white).

267. The Colonel then rode full gallop up to this dubious regiment, which was about 200 yards off and half hidden in the jungle; he was received by a volley full in the face, but, wonderful to say, he escaped without a touch: he returned among us, and called "All right, fire away, sepoy log." He was a brave officer and knew not fear, but none of us knew him in the regiment, or his word of command, which is a great drawback for a regiment in action.

268. Fighting continued all day, and neither side seemed to obtain the victory. The Sikhs lost guns, the Sirkar had some also taken by the Sikhs; their batteries sprung up so hidden by the tree jungle, it was impossible to tell the number of the guns. One regiment, the 24th Goras, charged a battery and were obliged to retire from the terrible fire of the guns and some Sikh regiment which were hidden behind the battery; this corps lost nearly half its number, and more than 20 officers were killed or wounded;[1] a native regiment was with them, and was beaten back with great loss. How could they stand if the Europeans could not? In the evening the Sikhs retired to a village by name Russulpore, and threw up entrenchments; this

[1] Nearly the same thing has occurred again with the ill-fated Regiment.—*Tr.*

battle was called Chillianmoosa (Chillianwalla), and took place on the thirteenth day of the first month of the year. The Sirkar's army remained on the ground all night, but it was not much of a victory: rain came on too, which made the place a perfect swamp. Not far from the thick jungle, in which this bloody battle was fought, were plains free from any jungle, and they would have been much better for fighting on.

269. This battle was not managed with the usual splendid arrangement of the Sirkar, but was fought in a hurry, and before the proper orders could have been explained to our whole force; besides which, the ground was not known at all by the English officers—always a great disadvantage in war; but then, in this battle, the Sirkar had nothing but disadvantages. The Sikhs fought well, but the fire was not so heavy as at Feroze-shah, and it was evident the Sikh army had not improved since its last war with the Sirkar, and there was not that reluctance or dread to meet the Sikh as shown by the Sepoy regiments during the first war.

270. Russulpore was a small village surrounded by deep ravines with a steep bank on its near side, and the river Jhelum not far off; this place might have been shelled if its position had been properly known, but the Sikhs were allowed to hold possession of it unmolested; they, however, had very heavy guns in position all round it, and a near approach was never practicable. During this time of inactivity we used to go down to the river to bathe and drink water, and repeatedly met the Sikh soldiers who seemed to think that the English army had received a heavy blow, so that it was stunned like a snake, or else, they said, why did not it attack them? In good truth, in some measure this was the case, but, then, the Sikhs had had enough of it to prevent them annoying our army much.

271. One day a sepoy of my company, rather celebrated for boasting of his deeds of valour, came into camp with his head nearly cut off and his face dreadfully gashed; the story he told was, that he was drawing some water out of a small *nullah* or arm of the river, when one of the enemy came down and attacked

him; this sepoy made out that he had shot the man, but I knowing that he was always making cats into tigers,[1] received his statement with some little doubt. Afterwards when the Sikhs laid down their arms, a Hindoostani in the Sikh service told me that he saw that sepoy drinking at the *nullah* and warned him to go away as, if the Sikhs saw him, they would certainly kill him; but instead of taking his advice in a friendly way the sepoy deliberately fired at him when quite close and missed him. The Hindoostani became so angry at his countryman's ingratitude (literally, bad manners) that he attacked him with his sword, and left him for dead, as he thought—at any rate with such marks as he would never get rid of for the rest of his life. After this was made known in the man's company, boasting left his lips for ever. * * *

272. The Sikh horsemen used to come out and challenge the English army to single combat. One day a chief came forth, and the challenge was accepted by an English soldier in the Lancer Regiment, and one out of the Dragoons; one of these men was killed, and the other severely wounded; the Europeans were angry at their defeat, and some of them fired at the Sikh and killed him. These men went without the orders of their officers, who were very angry and annoyed at their being beaten.

273. I was here struck with the difference between the white man and the black man when wounded in action: the former would shake his fist at the enemy and call down vengeance on their heads, but never utter a cry of pain; the latter, if hit in the legs or arms, would dance round hugging the limb and call out "*Dohaie, dohaie*, Company 'Bahadoor'" (have pity, have pity, mighty Company).

274. One morning it was reported that the Sikhs had left their position and moved up the bank of the river. The English were now expecting the force which had been employed in

[1] The same meaning as "geese into swans," "mountains of mole hills."—*Tr.*

the siege of Mooltan to join it, as that place had fallen into the hands of the Sirkar. Some time in February this force did arrive, and our army moved on after the Sikhs, who had determined to make a stand at a place called Goozerat, where their *Grunts*[1] (priests) promised them victory. The Sikhs had also been joined by Sirdar Chuttur Singh, who had managed to get away from Mooltan without being molested. An action was fought at this place—Goozerat; it was almost entirely a fight with large guns. My regiment was on guard over the baggage, therefore a good way in the rear, and I do not know much about this fight from actual eye-sight. The Sikh guns were dismounted, their lines broken, the village carried at the point of the bayonet, and the whole of the Sikh army fled towards Rawulpindee.

275. After this battle some Europeans were walking about the field with lighted pipes; some large *dubahs* (skins made into the form of a jar, very hard and strong) by some means blew up, being filled with powder, and so severely burnt some five or six Europeans and several sepoys that they all died in dreadful agonies: the unfortunate men ran towards their comrades begging they would send a bullet through their heads and put them out of their unbearable torments. I saw one or two sepoys, who I think belonged to the 72nd N. I.; they were burnt from head to foot, and the flesh fell off in charred lumps. I had often seen Sikhs fearfully burnt, by their matches setting fire to their cotton-wadded coats when they were wounded, and then exploding their pouch-boxes, but I never saw such a frightful sight as these sepoys before. What a wonderful thing is fate! These men, Europeans and sepoys, had gone through both battles without a wound, and yet when taking a walk after the battle, for mere amusement, met their death! The God of war[2] was not satisfied with the slain.

[1] *Granth Ṣāḥib* is the sacred book of the Sikhs. Their priests are called *guru.—Ed.*

[2] *Kārtik.—Ed.*

276. After this battle of Goozerat, the Sikhs fled across the river Jhelum, and were followed by a light column of our army, who came up with them near an old fort on the road to Rawulpindee; the remainder of the Sikhs, finding that they had now no chance of escape against the Sirkar, and having lost nearly all their guns, surrendered to the English General Saheb.

277. They were allowed to depart to their homes, after having laid down their arms: each man had one rupee offered him to help him on the way home; some few took this, but many refused it with scorn.

278. There was with the Sikhs a body of Afghan horse, who had been sent by the Dost to do mighty deeds against the Feringhees, but these all escaped by reason of their horses and got through the passes in front of Peshawur without being attacked. I have been told that at Chillianmoosa they made an attempt at an attack, but I never saw any of them, and am inclined to think they took great care to keep out of bounds of shot or shell, and that their mighty deeds were confined to bahadooring boasts.

CHAPTER XIV.

279. After the fall of Mooltan and the total defeat of the Sikhs at Goozerat, the Sirkar took possession of all the land of the Punjab or Five Rivers. The mighty power of the Sikh nation became as dust, and the mantle of rule descended upon the Sirkar, the Great Company Bahadoor. The Sirdars were all taken prisoners; and their troops, deprived of their weapons, were disbanded, and sent off to their homes. English regiments were stationed all over the Punjab, at Lahore, Wuzeerabad, Jhelum, Rawulpindee, Attock, Peshawur, and many other places, without any further opposition. Truly, the English are a wonderful people: in six months after this, barracks arose out of the ground as if by magic. The Sahebs built houses, police were stationed, and the country appeared as if it had belonged to the Sirkar for many years.

280. My regiment was now sent to Jullundur. Two regiments of old Sikh soldiers were enlisted for the Sirkar,[1] and young Sikhs were taken into the Native regiments; this annoyed the sepoys greatly, as they were disliked by the Hindoostanees, and considered as unclean, and were not allowed to associate with them: their position was for a long time very uncomfortable, but after a while this dislike in a measure wore off; still these men always kept by themselves, and were looked on as interlopers by the old sepoys; they never were so clean on parade even, and from their habit of using curds for cleaning their long hair they always had an extremely disagreeable odour. Many of them, however, became as Hindoos when long absent from their own country.

281. For several years no fighting took place in Hindoostan, and nothing particular occurred except that several innovations were introduced into the army, and into the Civil Courts, which gave great offence to the people.

282. In 1855 a small war arose in the Soubah of Bengal with some jungle men called Sountals; my regiment was sent also, and was stationed near Ranegunge, not far from Calcutta. There I first saw the iron road and steam monster; this was more wonderful than anything I had ever seen before. When I asked the people about it, they said it was their belief that the English put some mighty demon into each iron box, and that it was his efforts to escape which made the wheel turn round; however, I saw the water put in, and coals lighted under it, but so ignorant am I of how it moves, that if an officer had not told me it was all the force of steam, I might easily have believed this demon fed upon wood, coal, or stones, and drank maunds of water. I went down to Calcutta in the train, but it went so fast, it nearly took away my senses. As it got near Calcutta all sorts of people came in of many low castes, who behaved as if they were equal to every one; this is not good, and it gave great annoyance to many.

1 Seetaram is in error; the two regiments he alludes to were enlisted after the first Sikh war, namely Ferozepore and Lodiana regiments.—*Tr.*

283. I was amazed by what I saw at Calcutta; ~~but what is the use of describing it to you, my Lord, who know it well~~? The ships, what can I say? they were one hundred times as big as I imagined; no wonder the Sahebs can go about all over the world; each ship would bring a regiment. The Lord Saheb's house was very big; if every ~~Ameer~~ (nobleman) in England lives in a house as large as that, which I was told they do, what a wonderful country! I noticed in the magnificent city that Sahebs seldom spoke to one another, and I was informed they did not know each other; but how can this be, if they all come from a small island?

284. These Sountals used bows and arrows, and large sharp axes, and always dispersed when we fired on them. At first it was reported that they used poisoned arrows, and they were much dreaded accordingly, but this was soon found out not to be the case. After a good deal of marching about through thick jungle, and guarding the high road near the Soane river one hot season, this outbreak was overcome, and my regiment was sent to———. I was informed by some of the Sountal people the chief reason they rebelled was they could get no justice in the civil courts as they had no money to bribe the *amlahs* (native officials) and their complaints were all against the rich *mahajuns*[1] and moneylenders, who had managed to get these simple people into their clutches and ruined them all. I know nothing about the truth of this, but it was a curious war: at one part of the jungle we were firing upon them, and at another the Sirkar was giving them cart-loads of rice.

285. A report now spread about that the Sirkar was going to take Oude from the Nawab. This created a great excitement throughout the army, which was chiefly composed of men from that country; many of them did not much care if the Sirkar took the country or not, but these were men who had no property there; still an undefined dislike and kind of fear took possession of all. During the year the Sirkar removed the Nawab to Calcutta, and took the kingdom of Oude into its own hands.

[1] *Mahāñjan*, a native banker.—*Ed.*

Regiments of local infantry and cavalry were raised, officered by English officers, and also a number of Assistant Commisioner Sahebs; many of these officers came from the Bombay and Madras armies, and were quite ignorant of the language, manners, and customs of the people; as were also all Sahebs who came from Bengal from the college.[1] The occupation of the country was effected without any open resistance at the time—it was so sudden the people never thought then of any combination; but the minds of all the Talookdars and head men were excited against the Sirkar who they considered had acted without honor, and had been very hard on the Nawab. There were plenty of interested people to keep alive this feeling; they assured every one that the estates of the rich owners would soon be confiscated by the Sirkar, who would easily manage by means of these law courts to make out that the present possessors had no right to them; and in truth so many had acquired property in Oude in ways that would never be recognized by the Sirkar, that they began to fear enquiry. All of these people had a large body of relations, retainers, or servants living with them, all interested parties, so that it fully accounts for the great excitement prevalent at the time throughout Oude, and consequently throughout the Sirkar's army. In my humble opinion I consider that the minds of the sepoys were by these measures made to feel distrust, and were induced to plot against the Sirkar, by this seizing of Oude. Agents of the Nawab of Lucknow and also of the King of Delhi were sent all over India to try the temper of the army; they worked upon the feelings of the men, telling them how treacherously the Feringhees had behaved to their king; they invented 10,000 lies and promises to induce the soldiers to mutiny, and turn against their masters the English, with the object of restoring the throne to the Emperor of Delhi, which they maintained was quite within the power of the army if it would only act together and do what they advised.

[1] The College of Fort William was abolished as a teaching body in 1854, when it was converted into the "Board of Examiners."—*Ed.*

286. It chanced that about this time the Sirkar sent chosen parties of men from each regiment to different stations to be instructed in the use of the new rifle; the men went on with their drill for some time, when by some means or other a report got about that the cartridges used for these new arms were greased with the fat of cows and pigs. The men from our regiment wrote to the others telling them of this, and great excitement began to be felt in every regiment. Some of the men said they had served the Sirkar for forty years, during which time nothing had ever been done to insult their religion; still, as I have mentioned, the minds of men had been made unsteady by the seizure of Oude; interested parties always pointed out, that the great aim of the English was to make the natives all Christians, and by the cartridge it was to be brought about, as both Mahomedans and Hindoos would be alike defiled.

287. I reported this curious story to my officer, but no notice was taken; and he only told me not to talk about it. Some time after this an order was read out to the regiment from the Commander-in-Chief, or Governor-General Saheb, saying that the Sirkar had not used any objectionable fat, and that in future the men should make up their own cartridges and use their own grease, so that they might be satisfied the Sirkar had no intention whatever of hurting their feelings or breaking their caste. The very reading out of this order was seized on by many as a proof the Sirkar had done it, or this order would have never been read. What was the use of denying this if it had not been the intention of the Government to carry it out?

288. The time of year for furlough came round—that is the month of April,—and it was my turn to go; but before I went I told my Commanding officer what I had heard, and warned him that great madness had possessed the minds of all men. I could not say what shape it would take; I never thought that the whole army would mutiny, but only those men who might have been sufferers by the taking of Oude, and that at present only a few of the worst characters were really affected. I also

warned him that this feeling might however spread; I knew that there were many men in every regiment whose wish it was to remain faithful, and I offered to give up my furlough if he thought it would be any use. The Colonel Saheb was of opinion that the excitement, which even he could not fail to see, would pass off, as it had often done before, and he recommended me to go to my home.

289. I arrived at my own village without hearing anything particular on the road; but soon afterwards a report came that the troops at Meerut and Delhi had risen and killed their officers, and proclaimed the King Emperor; they were excited to revolt by one whole regiment having been put into jail, and loaded with irons and thus having their *izzut* (honor) destroyed. This was so extraordinary that I refused to believe it, and considered it a story got up only to excite people's minds, but every day the rumour gathered strength, and I went to ask the Deputy Commissioner if it were true. I could not well do this without exciting suspicion, for at this time all the *amlahs*[1] (office people) were on the watch for any one who came. I went to his house with an *urzee* (petition), which the Chuprass[i] refused to take in to the Saheb, but told me it was the orders to receive none except at office hours; however, I managed to see the Saheb, and I told him the tale I had heard and asked him if there was any truth in it. The Saheb did not say one thing or the other, but asked me a number of questions, to find out how much I knew and what effect it had on the minds of the people in my *zillah*;[2] at last the Saheb told me he had heard of it (which I knew from the first by the questions put), but that the reports were very vague indeed.

290. Had I asked some important native official he would have denied his knowledge of the fact perhaps at once, and the more vehemently he would have denied it the more I should have been sure he knew all about it. If I had persisted, he

[1] In the first edition, the translator writes this word Aumlahs. *Ed.*

[2] *Zila'*.—*Ed.*

would have tried to find out what my feelings on the subject were, and then if I had committed myself by wishing the mutineers good luck, he would have informed against me, though he himself might have been heart and hand with them.

291. When I returned to my own village, the whole place was talking about the news. In a short time the entire country was in a ferment, and every regiment in it was said to be ready to mutiny; every day reports came in, that the regiments at the different stations had all risen and killed their officers. I went again to see the Deputy Commissioner, and offered to collect the furlough men of my own regiment, and also any pensioners who could use arms; he thanked me, and promised to let me know if it would be required.

292. Shortly after this, the regiments at Lucknow, Setapore, and other stations in Oude broke out into open mutiny, and the country was overrun with sepoys of these regiments. Many of these men returned to their homes and had nothing further to do with the mutiny except having been in a regiment which had mutinied.

293. I now discovered that I was watched, and was suspected of giving the civil officers information. One day a large body of sepoys of one of the mutinied regiments came through my village, and I tried to persuade them to go quietly to their houses, and pointed out to them the folly of going against the English Government; but these men were so intoxicated with the plunder they had taken, and the prospects of rewards from the Emperor of Delhi, that they turned on me, and were about to shoot me on the spot for having dared to speak about the Sirkar *Ungreese*; they called me a traitor, and at last made me a prisoner, and put heavy irons on me and a chain round my neck, declaring they would take me to Lucknow, where they would secure a large reward for having seized me, and where my punishment would be to have melted lead poured down my throat for daring to uphold the English rule under which I had served and eaten my salt, so many years. I was treated with every indignity; the men boasted of the deeds they had done,

and how the Sahebs had been so easily killed, or frightened into the jungles like hares; they were fully persuaded that the English rule had come to an end throughout India. I never saw men behave in such a manner even during the *Hooly*[1] festival; they all thought they would be made princes for what they had done, and were debating among themselves as to what offices they would hold under the King of Delhi; what they had done I could not find out, except that they had shot down their officers on the parade ground, and looted the station and set it on fire when there was not the slightest resistance.

294. On the road some persons informed them that a European regiment was not far behind them; their boasting was now redoubled, they would destroy it at once. This was what they said before people, but in their hearts the most abject fear reigned of meeting the Europeans. The regiment never appeared, nor indeed was there the least truth in the report, which I was very glad of, for they informed me I should at once be shot if any Europeans came.

295. The leader of this party, who was a sepoy although there were two Subedars with it, came to me one day and showed me a proclamation from the King of Delhi. It called upon all the sepoys to fall upon and destroy the English, promised immense rewards and promotion if the men of any regiment would rise and slay their officers; it stated that the English Sirkar intended to make all the Brahmins into Christians, which fact had been discovered, and in proof of it one hundred Padrees were coming into Oude; the caste was to be broken by making everybody eat beef and pork; the men were entreated not to allow this, but to fight for their caste and drive the detested Feringhees out of the country. It also stated the King had received news from the Sultan of Roum (Turkey) that the English soldiers had been all destroyed by the Russians; that there

[1] *Holi* in March or April. The word means boisterous mirth. Redness is the sign of love, hence the casting of red powder. Low caste people have debased the symbol and mixing it with water consider it a symbol of women's *menses.—Ed.*

were only the few regiments remaining which were in India; and that these were all separated at great distances and could easily be surrounded and destroyed. This proclamation was printed on yellow paper, and was said to be by order of the King. Every word of this was believed by every man who heard it; even I myself could not but feel somewhat impressed by it. I had never known the Sirkar interfere with our religion or our caste ever since I had been a soldier in its service certainly, but my mind was filled with some doubts. I remembered the treatment of many regiments as to the batta[1]—how it had been in the first place promised and then withheld; then that the Sirkar had seized Oude without any just cause. I had also observed the increase of late years of Padree Sahebs, who stood up in the streets of cities and told the people their cherished religion was all false, entreating them to become Christians; they always said they were not employed by the Sirkar, and that they received no money from it, but how could they say what they did, without its permission? Everybody believed they were secretly employed by it: why should they take such trouble if they were not ordered? Then I remembered how the Sirkar had been a protector to me, and that I had eaten its salt for forty years, and I determined never to go against it as long as it remained, but to do all I could for it.

296. My Lord, you must not forget that at this time I was bound with chains, and to all appearances being taken to a terrible death. Day after day when I heard city after city, station after station, were in the hands of the people, I cannot but say the thought sometimes came into my mind that the mighty Companee Raj was passing away, as all its guns had been taken, and its arsenals also; how could I help thinking otherwise? I still however had faith in the *ickbal* of the Sirkar, which had always been so wonderful and marvellous. I also thought that *Khoshikballe*[2] could never remain long with those

[1] *Bhattū*, derived from *bhāt* cooked rice.—*Ed.*

[2] Good fortune.—*Tr.*

who had committed such crimes and broken their good faith.

297. When the party of sepoys with whom I was, came near to Lucknow, from some orders which they pretended they received direct from the Nana of Bitour, the route was altered and they marched towards Cawnpore and crossed over the river. On the road, however, our party was surprised by a troop of mounted Sahebs. It was in the early morning, before it began to become light, and so sudden was the attack that these brave bahadoors, so far from attempting to fight and annihilate the Europeans, ran off into the jungle; they also, luckily for me, forgot to carry out their threat about shooting me. I was pulled out of a gharry[1] in which I had been carried, and very narrowly escaped being shot by one of these trooper Sahebs who thought I was a wounded or sick sepoy, never having taken any notice of my chains; he did not understand Hindoostanee but, as good luck would have it, an officer was near, who came up and heard my tale and saw my chains, which was a very convincing proof of the truth of my story; he gave orders to have my chains knocked off, and took me to the Officer Commanding, who wrote down my statement, my name, and my regiment. He was also very anxious to hear what state Oude was in and whether I had seen or heard of any Sahebs or ladies in the jungles. The last English Officer I had seen was the Deputy Commissioner of————————, who was, when I left, carrying on his work the same as usual; but this was a month before.

298. As I was not a very good rider the Captain Saheb could not make me a sowar, but when he found out I could read and write Persian, he made me *moonshee* to the troop, gave me a certificate of the account of my re-capture, etc., etc. I went about with this *rissalah* for some six weeks, during which time it destroyed several bands of mutinied sepoys, and one day had a hand-to-hand fight with a party of regular cavalry, who fired off their pistols and then rode along as hard

[1] *Gāṛī.—Ed.*

as they could, although three times the number of our party. Nineteen sowars were killed and twenty-one of the best Sirkar's horses captured; on our side five men were killed and seven wounded.

299. After this, our troop returned to Cawnpore, which had been retaken twice by the English. Through the kindness of my Captain (may the shadow of greatness always surround him) he took me to the Officer Commanding a Punjab regiment, and I was borne on the rolls of this corps as a supernumerary jemadar, and attached to it. This regiment was engaged in several actions, and also before Lucknow; followed the *bargees* [1] (mutineers) right into Nepaul, and I passed the old place again where I had been so frightened by the elephants some forty years before. All this is so well known I need not describe it again; but in no fight that I was in—and they were not few—did I ever see the mutinied sepoys, be they Hindoos, or be they Mussulmans, ever make a good stand and fight. Usually they stood the first discharge, and then took to flight when they could not get shelter behind walls or trees. I am told it was hard work at Delhi. I was not there; but the sepoys could not have fought well to have let an English force under 10,000 drive out 70,000 men, and they all in possession of the houses on either side.

300. One day in one of the enclosed buildings near Lucknow a great number of prisoners were taken, nearly all sepoys. After the fight they were all brought in to the Officer Commanding my regiment, and in the morning the order came that they should all be shot. It chanced that it was my turn to command the firing party. I asked the prisoners their names and regiment. After hearing some five or six, one sepoy said he belonged to the————————regiment, which was that my son had been in. I, of course, asked him if he had known my son Anuntee Ram of the Light Company. He answered, that that was his own name; but this being a very common name, and

[1] *Bāghī.—Ed.*

having always imagined that my son, as I had never heard from him, must have died of the Scinde fever, it did not at first strike me; but when he informed me he came from Tillowee, my heart leapt in my mouth. Could he be my long-lost son? There was no doubt of it, for he gave my name as his father, and he fell down at my feet imploring my pardon.

301. He with all the other men in the regiment had mutinied, and had gone to Lucknow. Once the deed was done, what was he to do? Where was he to go, if he had even been inclined to escape? At four o'clock in the day the prisoners were all to be shot, and I must be my son's executioner! Such is fate! I went to the Major Saheb and requested I might be relieved from this duty as a very great favor; but he was very angry, and said he should bring me to a court-martial for trying to shirk my duty: he would not believe I was a faithful servant of the English Government—he was sure my heart was in reality with the mutineers—he would hear me no longer. At last my feelings as a father got the better of me, and I burst into a flood of tears: I told him I would shoot everyone of the prisoners with my own hands if he ordered me, but I confessed that one of them was my son. The Major declared what I urged was only an excuse to get off shooting my own brotherhood. But at last his heart seemed touched, and he ordered my unhappy son (Kumbuckt) to be brought before him, and questioned him very strictly.

302. I shall never forget this terrible scene: for one moment I never thought of asking his life to be spared—that he did not deserve. He became convinced of the truth of my statement, and ordered me to be relieved from this duty!

303. I went to my tent, bowed down with grief made worse by the gibes and taunts poured on me by the Sikhs, who declared I was a renegade. In a short time I heard the deadly volley. My son had received the reward of mutiny! He showed no fear, but I would rather he had been killed in fight.

304. Through the kindness of the Major I was allowed to perform the funeral rites over my misguided son—the only one of the prisoners over whom it was performed, for

the remaining bodies were all thrown to the jackals and vultures.

305. I had not heard from my son since just after my return from slavery. I had not seen him since I went to Cabool, and thus I met him again, untrue to his salt, in open rebellion against the master who had fed his father and himself. But enough—more is unnecessary. He was not the only one who mutinied (literally, he was not alone when he mutinied). The Major told me afterwards that he was much blamed by the other officers for allowing the funeral rites to be performed on a rebel. But if good deeds wipe away sins—which I have heard some Sahebs believe as well as we do—his sins will be very white. Bad fortune never attends on the merciful. May my Major soon become a General!

CHAPTER XV.

306. Upon returning from my second Nepaul campaign, this time fighting, not against the Nepaul log, but against those men with whom the Sirkar had conquered the Nepaulese formerly, I was promoted to a Subadar, after forty-eight years of hard wear and tear in the Sirkar's service. I entered under the Companee Bahadoor's flag, and I ended under that of the Empress of the World. I was an old man of sixty-five years of age, and had arrived at the highest rank to be gained in the native army: but for this position I was much better fitted thirty years before. What could I now do at the head of my Company? How could I double, or do *laight infantree*[1] (light infantry)? But I was expected to be just as *chulak*[2] (active) as ever; no allowance made for forty-eight years' service. No one remembered I had carried a musket for thirty years, and had been in as many fights as most of the officers had lived years.

[1] Hence *laṭārī karnā* "to skirmish," a term still used in some regiments.—*Ed.*

[2] *Chālāk.*—*Ed.*

I was shouted at by the Adjutant as if I had been a bullock—a mere boy, young enough to have been my great grandson; sworn at by the *Comanieer* (Commanding Officer), called a fool, a donkey, a *booriah* [1] (old woman), and at last I was taken before the Commander-in-Chief and reported to be utterly useless—a man the C. O. could make nothing of.

307. I was brought before the Invaliding Committee *zuberdust* (*nolens volens*), which I passed; and I acquired the pension of a Soobadar, and if my rights had been considered, it would have been much better that I should have received it years before. I wished for this pension more than anything else in the world, yet I did not like to ask for it, and when I was, as it were, got rid of, by compulsion, of course I was not pleased. I have no doubt the Companee Bahadoor would have wished me to have had it years before; it was not its fault—it was the result of the new hard rules. The time it took to become a Soobadar was too far distant for many sepoys to aspire to; this promotion was seldom given until after forty years' service.

308. Of late years some men have become Jemadars and Soobadars in a short time; many were at once promoted if they brought a number of young men during the mutiny. This is a much better system, and these officers being influential men, were much more looked up to by the sepoys, being considered as the father of the company. But if the Sirkar wants men of rank and position, the pay of sixty-seven rupees a month will hardly tempt them. The native officers of the Irregular Cavalry are generally men of some wealth, the younger sons of good families: but then their pay is good, and enables them to keep up their position.

309. Those native officers who became Jemadars and Soobadars at once, did good service in the Mutiny,—led their men on well; they were young and full of spirit; but directly the war time was over, they were found not to know their drill so well as a sepoy who had been forty years at it, and was there-

[1] *Burhiyā*, subs. *Ed.*

fore much too old to perform it; they were bullied, questioned, examined, and drilled, until they became quite sick of the service, and numbers gave it up in disgust, as they had nothing else to look to in the way of advancement; some were sent away with presents of land, which no one else had cultivated.

310. The sepoy would be quite contented with a larger pension; and if he would get this after twenty-five years' service, he would not think much of being a Soobadar, which rank he could only get when he was too old to be fit for it, and unable to march, and when he ought to have been at home in ease, preparing for his death.

311. Our learned men said the Company's *Raj* (rule) was to come to an end in 1857, being one hundred years since their first great battle; but they did not say another English rule would succeed it,—far more hard, much more harsh. The Companee Bahadoor and its officers were much kinder to the people of India than the Sirkar is now; and if it were not for the old servants [1] of the Company, it would be far worse than it is.

312. In the last regiment I was with, there were five or six young Sahebs who came from some European regiment. Several of these had charge of a company: but it was evident they hated the sepoys, and always spoke severely and sneeringly to them. My notion is, that this way is not likely to make the sepoy like them much. Very few of these officers could speak to the men at all; and when they did it was not in a pleasant way. They may have learned to command European soldiers, but they did not know how to command the sepoys.

313. My Lord, sepoys will not fight well with those they do not like, or for a Government that is not kind to them. They were treated kindly, and they turned against their master: a better one they can never have again.

314. The Mussulmans were the first instigators of the mutiny;

[1] *i.e.*, English officials.—*Ed.*

and the Hindoos followed, like a flock of sheep over the bank of a river.[1] The chief thing that bred the rebellion was the knowledge of the power the sepoys had, and the little control the Sahebs were allowed to exert over them. They naturally from this fancied the Sirkar must be afraid of them; whereas it only trusted them too well. But as a son is not discarded by his parent for once rebelling against his authority, I will hope that the chastisement of the rebellious son received for this, will have a lasting effect, and that wickedness will never be allowed to attack the hearts of the sepoys again.

315. I now see that officers are afraid to trust the sepoy, and this must be the case for many years to come, but it is not justice to condemn all. Some there were who remained faithful; and still greater number whose fate it was to be in a regiment which mutinied. These did not wish to go against the Sirkar, but were acted on by fear that no distinction would be made for them when once the others had gone wrong. This was well known to the principal movers in the mutiny, whose first object it was so to implicate a regiment that all must go with them. All regiments took their colors with them: they did not break their oath of deserting them. They left the service of the English, and were supposed to have taken that of another Sirkar.

316. Let the English Sirkar look well to its Hindoo servants; remove as much as possible all causes of complaint, and they will not resist it; besides which they will seldom commence a rebellion, but will follow in its track when once begun. Let it remember the words of an old man who knows them: never trust the Mussulmans; they are the instigators and principal movers in all disturbances, always having an ill-feeling against the Sirkar. The Mussalman is the snake that the man put in his bed to keep warm, and in return it stung him; the snake's nature is to sting, therefore, obeying its nature, it

[1] When crossing a stream one sheep is forcibly pushed into the water first, when the remainder follow.—*Ed.*

stung. The religion of the Mussulman enforces on him the necessity of slaying what he calls an infidel, and promises him seven heavens seven times over for every one he slays.[1] With whatever pretences they may come forward, however earnestly they may assert they are faithful, and well-wishers of the English *Raj*, let the Saheb log never trust them, never believe them; they may have confidence placed in them, they may be treated with kindness, but never let it be supposed they can be real friends or well-wishers. They are puffed up with vain pride of the glorious days of their former emperors, and ever hope such may come again. As well might they expect the *Krityog*[2] to return.

317. Their priests keep up the feeling of hatred, and are always telling them some Mehndee[3] (prophet) is coming who will restore their sway; but he never comes. Our wise men have told me that truth was spoken in Hindoostan before the Mussulman came and overran it; and whatever bad vices are now prevalent, were all introduced by them. Before their accursed coming, crime was rare, but *thoba*! *thoba*! (alas! alas!) they have corrupted all alike now.

318. I know the Sahebs, and that nothing pleases them so much as a straight answer to a plain question, but the *kala admee* (native of India) does not know this generally and his endeavour is always to give an answer to a question such as shall please the asker,—exactly the one he thinks he is wished to give.

319. I never could feel myself again, or hold my head so high after the death of my son. His having fought against the

[1] This is, of course, only Sītā Rām's idea.—*Ed.*

[2] There are four ages according to the Hindoos. The *Krityog*, golden age, lasted 1,728,000 years; the *Tretyog*, silver age, 1,296,000; the *Dewapur*, brazen age, or age of uncertainty; and the *Kali*, Iron, black—the present one which is to last 403,000, and commenced long before the Christian era.—*Translator.*

[3] In the second edition Mehnmdee. Presumably the *Mahdī* is meant He will reform the whole world.—*Ed.*

giver of his salt was a great disgrace to me, and my chief solace is now thinking over the many years of my service, during which time, with the single exception I have mentioned, I was never punished; and I have given my lifetime to the Sirkar's service. I have one son left, he whom I send to your Lordship with my papers. I have two daughters, married; with large families.

320. I have not acquired any fortune, but I have my paternal estate, and the pension of a Soobadar, which is enough for me. The people in my village seem to respect me, and are now fully impressed with the ease and benefits they enjoy under the *Raj Ungreese* (English rule). The man that sows, feels satisfied he will reap, which he never could before. The people are still sometimes oppressed by the native officials; but redress is often to be obtained, and this oppression is every year becoming less and less, and when the district Saheb goes about himself, and personally inquires into all complaints, which our good Saheb does (may his office last for ever) and shows an interest in our welfare, there will be little inclination to resist the authority of the Sirkar; but when everything is left to the native officials, which is sometimes done, through the inability of the Saheb to understand what the people tell him,[1] they will be dissatisfied and talk against the Government, and long for a change.

321. My Lord, the native officials are all corrupt, be they Hindoos or Mussulmans. In this, there is no difference. There may be one, but I never heard of him, among them, who would not take a bribe of five rupees. A great reason for this is, the small pay given by the Sirkar. However, if only half were given, there would still be hundreds of applicants who would make up by bribery what they had not as *tunkha*[2] (wages). This was always the case in former times: the man who could give the largest sum always gained his cause. "When there are those who are willing to receive, there will be found those

[1] The complaint of to-day.—*Ed.*

[2] *Tankhwāh.*—*Ed.*

who will give; and when there are those who will give, it is not difficult to find those who will take." The Sahebs try and put this system down; but there is such a combination against them they can never be successful.

322. A Burra Saheb[1] (a civilian) is very angry when he hears a petitioner gave a bribe; he asks him why he did it. He, perhaps, does not know that the man firmly believes that a part of the bribe went to the Saheb himself. Therefore the man dare not say anything. The whole of the officials have told him so, from the *Muskooree* to the *Shirstidar*[2] (officer runner to the head man). I never heard of an office yet where the *Amlah* did not make out somehow or other that the Saheb was amenable to a bribe. They live by it themselves, so of course, it is their interest to keep up the idea.

323. The head *Putwaree* (man who keeps the village records, etc.) in my village told me one day it must have been my fault having been so long in obtaining my promotion. When I told him I had never done anything wrong, he laughed and said I was not wise, though I had been so much in the world. Of course he meant I had not paid for it; he thought it was to be bought like everything else.

324. I have known very few cases of English Officers taking bribes. I have heard of many doing so, but never believed it; for I know their *izzut* (honor) is great. I see, however, no difference in the European soldier of small rank and the black man, when he is in a position to obtain bribes. I know the Sahebs do not take them, but I also know that many much better educated than I am, firmly believe they do. How can they imagine anything different from their own *tubeat*[3] (nature)?

325. I remember I had occasion to go to a Deputy Commissioner's office once on some small business of my own. I was in my Hindoostani dress, and imagined I could walk in, as I had been told it was an open court of justice. Immediate-

[1] A Collector, etc.—*Ed.*

[2] *Sar-rishta-dār*, the head of the vernacular office. *Michkūrī.*—*Ed.*

[3] *Ṭabī'at.*—*Ed.*

ly two or three chupprassees came to me to know what my business was: I told them it was with the Saheb, not with them. They then said that it was very difficult to see the Saheb; that he was engaged, and a hundred other excuses were made—ending by informing me that if I gave five rupees, one of them would take my petition in himself, and lay it before the Commissioner. I answered I had no petition. I was then prevented entering the *huzoor's* (honor's) presence for a long time, only because I would give nothing to any of them. At last, a head moonshee came out and spoke to me; he told me the Saheb's temper was very bad that day, but if I wished particularly to see him, some other official would mention the fact to him and dare to brave his wrath, but for this I must give ten rupees.

326. Getting tired of these attempts at extortion, and also not believing the man's story, I entered the *dufftur* (office), but the chupprassees and officials tried all in their power to prevent me; they all began talking against me, saying "what a man of no manners I was, so to intrude," and spoke loud to attract the Sahib's attention. I walked straight up, made a military salute, and requested permission to speak; but I was ordered to be turned out, and called names also. The peons attempted to do this, but I did not allow them to touch me; and as the Sahib had ordered me himself, I went outside, having told him my name, regiment, and rank. A chupprassee, one of those who first came to me, trumped up a case, that I had resisted authority; the whole *dufftur* (office) swore I had beaten him dreadfully, and he showed his face all over blood (which he must have had ready for the purpose) as I only pushed away those who had attempted to touch me. I was fined ten rupees (£1) for resisting authority. When I returned to my regiment I reported the whole case, just as it had occurred, to my Commanding Officer, who was very angry and wrote about it; but I never received any redress for this great insult.

327. If a civilian is easy of access, and will take the trouble to listen to the complaints of the poor, this bribery can, in a

great measure, be prevented: for the officials will then be afraid, he will hear the rights of a case, and the people will see it is no use offering bribes.

328. The punishments the Sirkar orders to be inflicted for offences, are thought by many to be absurd and by most classes to be dictated by fear. A low-caste man is convicted of breaking into a house and stealing jewels from the women, attended by violence; he is sent to prison for a year or more, where he is much better fed, clothed and attended to, than he ever was in his life. True it is, he is deprived of his liberty; but he gets his food, and the *suckth mehanut* (hard labor) he laughs at: what is it to a coolie who has to work hard for his half seer of *attah* (flour)? Under the native government he would have had his hand chopped off.[1] This is a real punishment—one the thief would never forget, and one which has a great effect upon all evil-doers, which I conceive to be the use of punishment.

329. The Sirkar should remember that the *ryot*[2] (country man) is only a *byle* (bullock). A *byle* does not care for being beaten with a small stick; he requires a goad: so it is with these men. The Sirkar's punishments have no effect upon them; in fact they are a perfect laughing-stock. The laws of the English, no doubt, are very wise and good for them; but the laws of the *Durrum Shastur*[3] (Hindoo Code) which were made for us, are the best; and those we much prefer. These are written in a language which can be understood,[4] which few Hindoos can say for the English laws, all of them being in Arabic.

330. I have often asked Moulvies, etc., why our laws cannot be written in a language we know? They have told me their meaning could not be given in Hindi. It would appear to me

[1] In Muslim law, amputation of the right hand is the punishment for a first offence of theft. Hindu law punishes the limb which committed the crime.—*Ed.*

[2] *Ra'iyat.*—*Ed.* [3] *Dharam Shāstar.*—*Ed.*

[4] The Translator begs leave to differ with the Soobadar. Few Hindoos understand Sanskrit, any more than they do Arabic.—*Tr.*

that crimes which cannot be expressed in a people's tongue, do not require any laws to expound their punishments. Who can understand why a man should not punish his wife if guilty of adultery? Can money satisfy his revenge? This is not justice, and causes great dissatisfaction. There is but one opinion on this point.

331. I have said all I can remember of interest in my life, and I have given my opinion on many subjects, which I should never have thought of doing had not your Lordship so earnestly desired me. If I have said anything unseemly, my Lord must grant me pardon. But what I have said is true: I have fired at no mice with cannon (*i.e.*, have not exaggerated). In my own village I see very few Sahibs; sometimes the district officer is pleased to listen to my story. I go twice a year into cantonments to receive my pension, and then have a talk of former days. But there are few of the old Sahibs left now, and the new ones do not care much to listen to an old man's *buk-buk* (babble) of things and events which took place before they were born. Thanks be to Bugwhan and Purmeshur[1] (to God the Creator), I want nothing through the bounty of the Sirkar; and I have a son still left to perform my funeral ceremonies;[2] and if your Lordship when you return to your own country, will always remember that the old Soobadar Seetaram was a true and faithful servant of the English Government, it is all I wish; it is enough for me. And with profound respect to one who has always been to me as a father, I now make my most humble obeisance.

THE END.

1 *Bhagwān. Parameswar.—Ed.*

2 These ceremonies are considered among the Hindoos of very great importance; and to have no one to perform them, is one of the greatest misfortunes that can possibly befall a worshipper of Brahmah. This accounts for their custom of adopting sons, when none are born to them or have died. Every year these ceremonies are repeated.—*Tr.*

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